

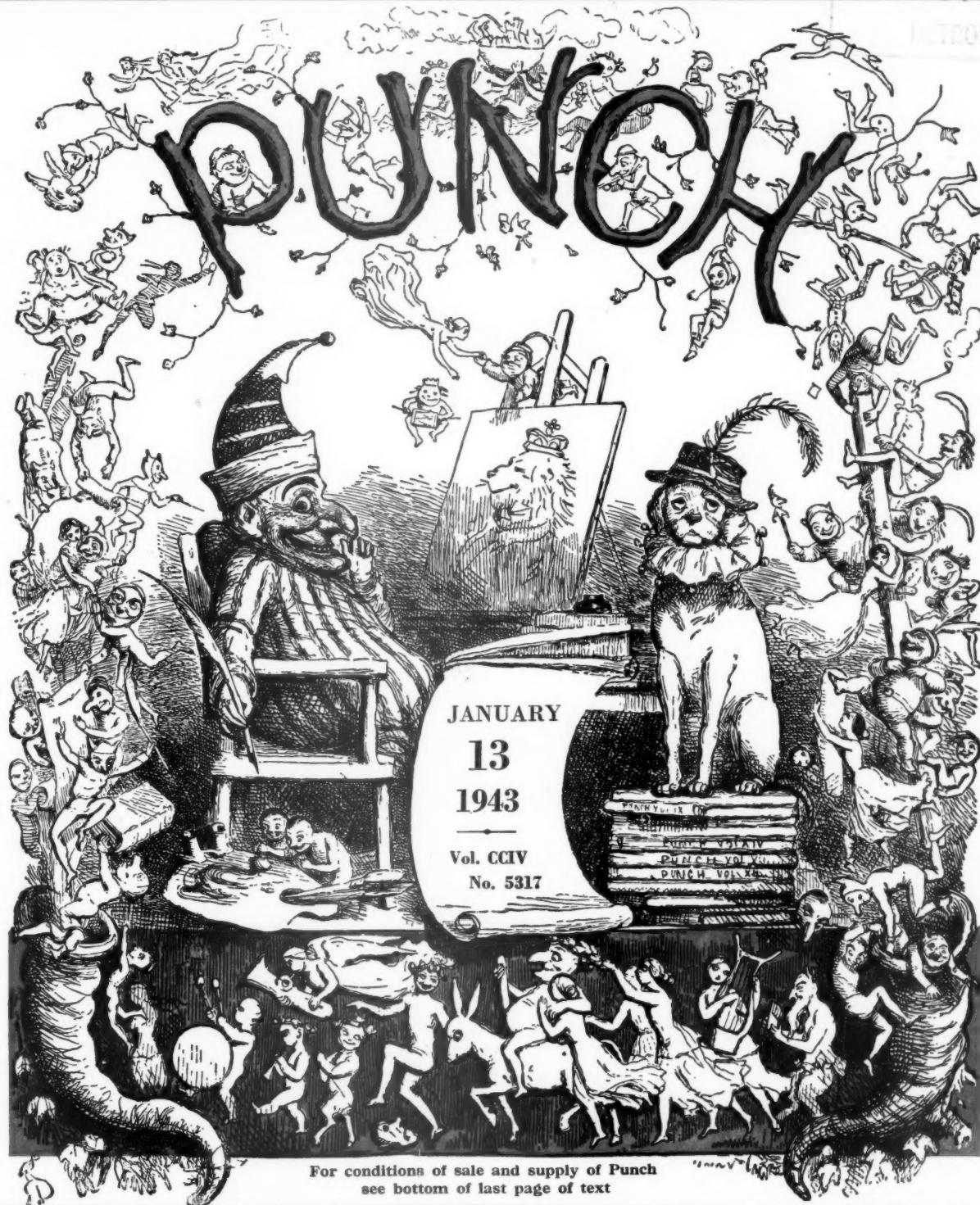
**Treasure Those Tyres
AND SAVE RUBBER FOR VICTORY**



DUNLOP

ESTD 1873

Detroit



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

"TripleX"—the safety glass



Lil loves the little
new-born calves
She wants to knit
them woolly scarves

She fairly takes the biscuit!

—and Weston MAKES the biscuit

The Land Girl has to be out early and in late, and often she has little time for meals.

Biscuits stand her in good stead, as they do millions of others whose hours are long and full. The pure wheat from which they are made is a rich source of endurance and energy for all.

Food indeed for busy folk, biscuits require no preparation — there is nothing to clear away or wash up — and they are enjoyable without additions. They only ask to be eaten.

WESTON

Biscuits

MADE BY THE LARGEST BISCUIT MAKERS IN THE EMPIRE

Sharp's
THE WORD
FOR TOFFEE

P.S. MINISTRY OF FOOD
ANNOUNCEMENT - This is the
1st week of ration period No. 7

FUEL ECONOMY HINT

DON'T GAS
TURN IT OFF

EDWARD SHARP & SONS LTD. MAIDSTONE

du MAURIER





Inspiration ...

To the creation of a good Vermouth belongs a special flair. Its virtue is in the blending of white wine with aromatic herbs and spices. Here is work for the master hand and here—in the genius of its blending—Votrix discovers its entirely individual character. True to tradition and produced with juice of Empire grapes, Votrix is a British Vermouth and a wine of which we can all be justly proud.

VOTRIX VERMOUTH

is produced at the Vine Products vineyard in Surrey, but owing to the unavoidable wartime restriction of supplies you may often find it difficult to obtain. Votrix "Dry", bottle size 6/9. Votrix "Sweet", bottle size 6/3.



Your Hair Brush rebristled

I specialise in replacing bristles in worn brushes. Forward your Ivory, Silver or Ebony brushes, when quotation will be sent by return of post.

JOHN HASSALL,
Brush and Mirror Manufacturer
(Dept. L.),
64 St. Paul's Churchyard, LONDON, E.C.4

QUEEN ANNE

RARE SCOTCH WHISKY

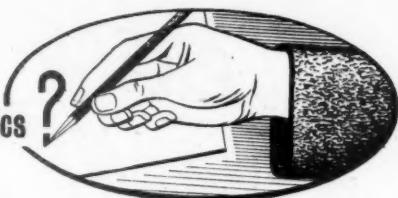
IN THE
BETTER PLACES



By Appointment
Holders of Royal
Appointment to
successive Sov-
ereigns since 1838

HILL THOMSON & CO. LTD
EDINBURGH. Est. 1793

What are Plastics?



One might as well ask "What are metals?"—for Plastics are becoming as numerous and varied as the older raw materials. All are different, behave differently and have their own particular usefulness to Industry. To name a few members of the Plastic family there are Celluloid, "Erinoid", "Bakelite", "Beetle", "Perspex", Nylon, "Rhodoid", "Scarab", Melamine, Vinyl, Styrene. All are different, and each has its own peculiar properties and uses. We do not make all the plastics mentioned above; indeed, many of them bear the trade names of other manufacturers.

If you think you could use Plastics as raw materials for your industry our advice is freely given. If one of our Plastics is suitable for your use we shall recommend it. If not, we shall quickly put you in touch with another manufacturer able to supply a Plastic which is more suited to your particular job. It is of more interest to us that you use the right Plastic than that you should use one of ours at all costs. A Plastic wrongly chosen can result in a bad product which would bring discredit to an industry to which we are proud to belong.



BRITISH INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS LTD • ONE ARGYLL ST • LONDON • W.1



NOW . . .

for vital War work only, such as reinforcing shelters, installing machinery and general factory maintenance.

AFTER
THE WAR . . .

for all work entailed by reconstruction, repairs to building and other work connected with the building industry.

The Kango hammer has for a long time taken the place of the hammer and chisel at an immense saving of labour.

KANGO
ELECTRIC HAMMER

MANSIONS MOTOR COMPANY LTD.
Morden Factory Estate • South Wimbledon • London • S.W.19
Telephone : LIBERTY 4253 (3 lines) Cables : Exhausters, Phone, London.

**Less
Time
for
Housework**

Many busy War Workers, with home duties, find 'Mansion'—the time-saving polish—a real help in keeping the home bright, clean and healthy.



FOR FLOORS, FURNITURE & LINOLEUM

Walls have ears, we know, but if they could speak as well, the walls of the 'Genatosan' Laboratories could tell a tale of research and experiment, of never-ceasing effort and continual progress.

Vitally needed Fine Chemicals, not now obtainable from overseas, must be produced in this country. Their production is part of the story which lies behind the present shortage of 'Samatogen' Nerve-Tonic Food and 'Genasprin'.



SEAGERS regret

the unavoidable shortage of supplies of their Products is causing disappointment—certainly the Products themselves have never been known to disappoint! Till easier days return, our best advice is the old motto: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again."

SEAGERS

GIN - 22/6. EGG FLIP - 13/6.
COCKTAILS:
Super - 12/6. Full-strength 11/6.
SEGAVIN - 10/6.

Supplied to the public through the Retail Trade ONLY.

SEAGER, EVANS & CO. LTD.

Distillers of Fine Gin for over 135 years



KERFOOT'S MEDICATED PASTILLES

embodying the manufacturing experience of eighty years

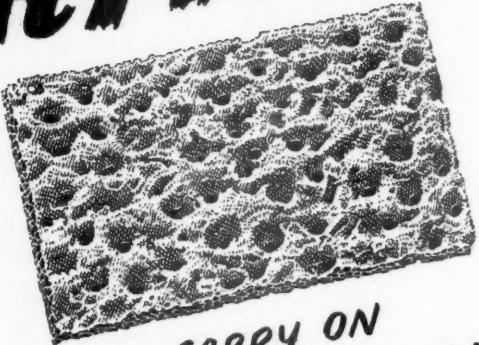
MENTHOL & EUCALYPTUS
CATARRH·ANTISEPTIC THROAT
GLYCERINE OF THYMOL

Thomas Kerfoot & Co. Ltd.
Vale of Bardsley
Lancashire

P1

Tri-ang
TOYS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS
L.B.LTD. London



AS YOUR **BREAD**-use crisp
RYVITA

-AND CARRY ON
WITH GOOD DIGESTION

SHIP-SAVING GRAIN FOOD

Ryvita Bread is made entirely from whole-grain rye, all home-grown by our own farmers.

USE RYVITA AS TOAST ... READY TO EAT ... SAVES FUEL



THE AGE-LONG VALUE OF BITUMEN

"The Archers"—The famous frieze built in the King's palace at Susa, ancient Persia, erected 485 B.C. . . . was an example of the value of Bitumen. Records show that such monumental exhibits contained Bitumen in the bonding as a damp-proofing agent. There are, however, many uses to which Bituminous products can be put today—in all classes of shipbuilding, engineering and constructional work.

If you manufacture any special product in which Bitumen forms a part, tell us your needs, and we will gladly lend our aid in producing what you require.

Research Department
James A. Jobling & Co. Ltd.,
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Makers of
PROBIT
BITUMINOUS
PRODUCTS

Carters (INVALID FURNITURE)



Owing to essential contracts the range of invalid chairs and invalid furniture is now limited, but we are still in a position to supply certain articles. Please give full particulars of your needs and we will endeavour to accommodate you.

GT. PORTLAND ST., LONDON, W.1.
Phone: Langham 1049.

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SAVES  **FUEL**
SOAP
LABOUR ...

In these days we must not waste, nor use unnecessary cleaning materials. A few drops of Scrubb's in the water will save soap when washing clothes or washing up; it will also make the washing of floors easy, therefore, it saves labour. Fuel is saved because less hot water is needed. Scrubb's cannot harm the most delicate lingerie yet it will make paintwork look like new.

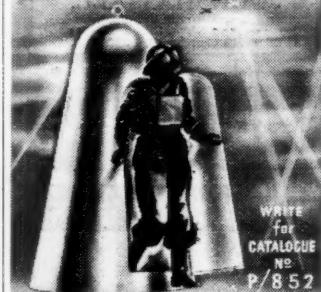
SCRUBB'S
CLOUDY AMMONIA

1/6 per bottle

From Grocers, Chemists & Stores
C. & N. P. LTD.
Wimbledon Factory Estate,
London, S.W.19

**EVERY CLEANING
NEED IN ONE BOTTLE**

"CONSOL" Shelters
for KEY PERSONNEL



WRITE FOR
CATALOGUE
No. P/852

CONSTRUCTORS
NICKEL WORKS ERDINGTON
BIRMINGHAM 24.

**EMERGENCY TREATMENT
OF SKIN INJURIES**

**SAFETY
FIRST**
USE

WARDONIA
BLADES
FOR BETTER SHAVES

1/- and 2/6 PACKETS (Plus Tax)
SOLD BY ALL N.A.A.F.I. CANTEENS
Famous all round the World.

Be prepared for an emergency and keep Cuticura Brand Ointment in your First-Aid Kit. It brings instant soothing relief to cuts, burns, skin lacerations—prevents spread of infection, quickly heals. At all Chemists and Stores.

Cuticura
BRAND
OINTMENT



CHILPRUFE is still entirely PURE WOOL

The restricted supplies of wool necessitated by war-time conditions are being used by CHILPRUFE solely for the production of essential garments for infants and young children. Despite difficulties every effort is being made to maintain the traditional high standard, thus ensuring the maximum protection and durability which are more essential than ever in these days. Unavoidable shortage of supply is regretted, but the greatest care is taken to ensure a fair distribution.

CHILPRUFE LIMITED
Governing Director: JOHN A. BOLTON
LEICESTER

CHILPRUFE *Made Solely for* CHILDREN



Here are the most Delicious Sandwiches

Patum Peperum, "The Gentleman's Relish," most delicious of all savouries, the ideal spread for Sandwiches. Its unique flavour makes the perfect Sandwich for all occasions—on toast, too, it is equally delightful. Ideal for convalescents.

Osborn's PATUM PEPERUM

THE GENTLEMAN'S RELISH

Also ask for "OSBORN'S" Anchovy Paste, "OSBORN'S" Savoury Sauce and "OSBORN'S" Anchovy Specialities. Be sure you get "OSBORN'S." Still supplied at pre-war prices. Obtainable from all the best Grocers, Stores, etc. Every endeavour will be made to meet your demands. We cannot supply direct to the public.

Send Id. stamp for Recipe Book to Dept. P.
C. OSBORN & CO. LTD., LONDON, N.16
(Established 1828)



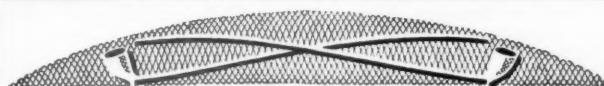
Best British Brushes for every need

The
KENT-
COSBY

"Allure"
PERFUME HAIRBRUSH

Brushes beauty and fragrance into your hair!
G. S. KENT & SONS, LTD., 222 REGENT ST., LONDON, W.1

- PERFUME PAD
- BRISTLES TAKE OUT TO WASH
- HANDLEBACK NEVER SPOILT BY WATER
- ABSOLUTE CLEANLINESS AT BRISTLE ROOTS



In the Mall



Rothmans for 'good things' in the way of smoking. This was the nucleus of the nation-wide clientele now served by Rothmans of Pall Mall — through Rothman shops or direct by post.

During the present war, the recent shortage of cigarettes revealed additional advantages in this personal supply system. As manufacturing tobacconists we were able to ensure that Rothman customers should still receive regular supplies.

With this experience in mind, we now offer a suggestion. Smokers wishing to assure themselves of a regular supply of high-grade cigarettes (or tobacco) are advised to make an early enquiry at a Rothman shop, or to write to Rothmans Ltd., (Folio H4) 5, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

Rothman
OF PALL MALL
the best-known tobacconist
in the world

Though deprived of its railings (gone to make Matildas) the Mall remains one of London's finest thoroughfares. In peaceful Victorian times, when the Mall was a fashionable promenade, a coterie of its habitués used to look in at



For special needs and occasions

we are still making some stockings that do not come within the Utility specification. Production is strictly limited, but all supplies are distributed fairly among Aristoc dealers.

'RAYSTOC'
(Rayon)

'ARISTILE'
(Lisle)

UTILITY
(Rayon & Lisle)

Aristoc

THE ARISTOCRATS OF WARTIME STOCKINGS



LOOK AFTER THOSE SUEDE SHOES

Coupons and higher prices make it a sad day when you have to superannuate your suede shoes, so it's good to know that Meltonian Suede Cleaner makes them stay young longer—and smarter.

Meltonian Suede Cleaner is the enemy of those shiny spots, and always keeps the suede soft and supple.

Use it regularly and you can be proud of your old shoes for a long time yet.

*Meltonian
Suede
Cleaner*

Use Meltonian White Cream for polished leather of any colour



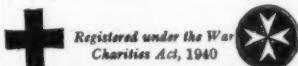
RED CROSS

Jewel Sales

1942.. £109,949

1943.. ? ?

Our Prisoners of War, our Wounded, our Sick... their needs grow and the sacrifice of people at home must grow to meet the need. WILL YOU help to make our 1943 contribution larger than it was in 1942, through the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross & St. John Fund... Will you help with a Jewel to the Secretary, Red Cross Sales, 17 Old Bond Street, London, W.1, for the next RED CROSS Jewel Sale at Christie's, on January 20.



THIS SPACE IS A GIFT TO
THE RED CROSS BY
BEECHAMS PILLS LTD.



WE MEN OF
TO-MORROW—
need
'KEPLER'
to-day!

It is of vital importance to start building strength for the future in children now. So much depends upon these formative years. The soundest way of helping children over wartime difficulties is to give them extra nourishment and extra vitamins. 'Kepler' Cod Liver Oil with Malt Extract gives them food and vitamins in concentrated form.

It helps to build sturdy bodies—and to protect against illness. Children love its rich, malty sweetness.
● 'Kepler' is delicious malt extract with pure cod liver oil, of such particularly fine and careful quality, and so rich in protective vitamins that it costs more — 3/6 and 6/3.



There's FOOD as well as vitamins in

'KEPLER' COD LIVER OIL WITH
MALT EXTRACT

BURroughs Wellcome & CO. (The Wellcome Foundation Ltd.) LONDON



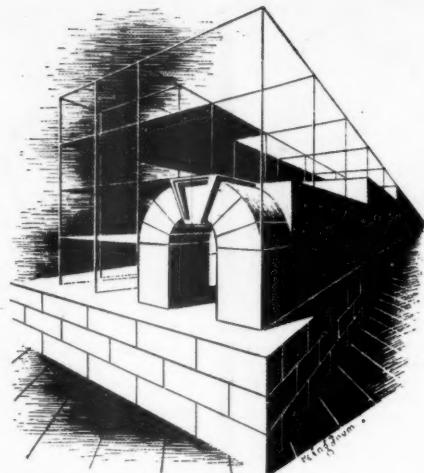
When you see that Trade Mark on the cloth, or that Label on a finished garment, you know that here is Harris Tweed—100% pure virgin Scottish wool, woven by hand at the homes of

the Islanders of the Outer Hebrides, by crofters whose skill has grown through generations. There is nothing else like it: nothing to equal its style, character or marvellous wearing power.

HARRIS TWEED

The Board of Trade accepts the following definition:—"Harris Tweed" means a Tweed made from pure virgin wool produced in Scotland, spun, dyed and finished in the Outer Hebrides and hand-woven by the Islanders at their own homes in the Islands of Lewis, Harris, Uist, Barra and their several purtenances and all known as the Outer Hebrides.

THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LTD.,
10 Old Jewry, London, E.C.2.



STABILITY

More than fifty years of ordered progress and purposeful development have laid the foundations on which Philips have built a great commercial enterprise. Its record of achievement and service, in peace and war, reflects the foresight of its builders and the stability of the structure they have created.

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LAMPS · DISCHARGE LIGHTING · RADIO RECEIVERS · TRANSMITTERS · VALVES & THERMIONIC DEVICES · MEDICAL & INDUSTRIAL X-RAY & ELECTRO-MEDICAL EQUIPMENT · ARC WELDING EQUIPMENT & ELECTRODES · LIGHT ALLOY RESISTANCE WELDING PLANT · MAGNETIC OIL FILTERS · MAGNETS · SOUND AMPLIFYING INSTALLATIONS

PHILIPS LAMPS LTD., CENTURY HOUSE, SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, LONDON, W.C.2 (1108)

An epicure dreams of post-war planning



W. SYMINGTON & CO. LTD., MARKET HARBOROUGH



PUNCY

OR
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIV No. 5317

January 13 1943

Charivaria

"My husband, always an enthusiastic cyclist, gave it up after running over a dog in the black-out," states a housewife. It put him off.

"Fuehrer Fatter," says a heading. His doubles now receive priority food Coupons to catch up.



"I have never tasted anything like British beer," says a U.S. Army officer. He has arrived too late.

Alexander Dourof, a Russian sword-swallowing, states that sword-swallowing does not entail fasting or other preparations. Still, safety-razor blades would be a cheaper diet.

A table-tennis player won a championship contest on her birthday. Many happy returns.

We hear that an American soldier visited a London hair-dressing saloon and had a trim, singe, shampoo, massage and shave and bought a packet of razor-blades. Leading up to the blades in this way might be worth trying.

Inference

"The statement that the convoy was small is presumed to mean that the size of the party which forced its way ashore was not large."—*Australian Paper*.

A South American woman who swallowed a handful of iron filings in a quart of water was taken to hospital, where she is expected to recover. There the matter rusts for the moment.

Army recruits are now being given bayonet-fighting instruction on the lines of shadow-boxing. Trained to stick at nothing.

"When a young author has finished a novel he should have it read aloud to him," says a critic. This may effect a cure.

Husband Makes Good.

"Then came the great day when an ingenious young Tasmanian built a radio from scraps of wife, solder and old tins."

Daily Paper.



A man has played the tin whistle for ten years at one London street corner. His takings have increased lately through an arrangement made with a nearby restaurant to act as a cover charge.

"Citizens of the Reich are confused by the communiqués from the Eastern Front," says a writer. Nevertheless, one predominant fact emerges—the German advance on Rostov continues.

A comic clockwork figure of MUSSOLINI is on sale in America. Very realistic—even to the wind up.



"Hitler's Ears Are Burning," says a headline. The beginning of the end?

Protesting against complaints of over-charging, London taxi-drivers declare that only a few outsiders are guilty. Fare's fair.

In Germany fishmongers are often offered cast-off clothing in exchange for fish. This is what is called setting a spat to catch a mackerel.

About Seals and Meals

(Reflections in Hospital)

SOMEWHERE about half-past nine in the evening of Christmas Day I was listening to Miss Vera Lynn singing about "Christopher Robin" and reading about the method of harpooning seals employed by the Angmagssalik Esquimaux. That is (for I see a possible ambiguity raising its ugly head), I was doing the listening and reading, Miss Lynn was concentrating on Christopher Robin. I should not suspect her of any predilection for so gross a business as the harpooning of seals, even were it a feasible accomplishment to read about these creatures and sing simultaneously of Christopher.

I was sipping, too, a cup of cocoa, a fact which I mention not so much for its intrinsic interest as to round off the picture, to give background and depth to the homely scene, to show perhaps (and thus to stifle pity) that even in hospital Christmas is not without its festive moments. It would be interesting to know whether any other reader was similarly employed at half-past nine on Christmas night?

I have spoken of the harpooning of seals as a gross business, but in fact it is an operation calling for patience, skill, ingenuity, strength, accuracy, a nice sense of balance and a readiness to be suspended upside-down beneath the Arctic waters of an ice-choked Greenland fiord. It is this final desideratum, I think, which makes the sport such delightful sick-bed reading. The pillows may be too high or too low, the top sheet has come adrift again, the bed is full of oatmeal biscuit and the right pyjama leg has once more with indomitable persistence rolled itself up above the knee and checked the feeble flow of blood to the extremities, one may even be, one frequently is, hanging head-downwards sweeping with frantic fingers under the bed for an elusive book or bed-sock; but at least one's trunk is not immersed in ice-cold water.

Readers anxious to know why it is necessary to submerge the greater part of the body when harpooning seals should study *Watkins' Last Expedition*, published in 1934 and now reaching our better-known hospitals in large numbers. In any case it isn't necessary to submerge oneself; it is a contingency that better men than you or I find it difficult to avoid.

I find myself in sympathy with the seal-hunter from another angle or aspect—that of food. He is thinking of his next meal as he chuck's his sinister weapon. If he misses, then it's back to the old menu of dried cod or pemmican (whatever that is), unless he's had the luck to shoot a guillemot or a glaucous gull or two. A hit opens up the most fascinating possibilities. He can have fried seal-liver. He can have seal steak or stew. He can boil the ribs and flippers; or, if he feels the need of it, he can eat the liver raw as an antiscorbutic. But (if I may quote for a moment) "perhaps the best way of cooking seal-meat is to cut it into small cubes and then to fry it with potatoes and onions." Or again you can have a polar bear and seal's-liver pie—if you've got a polar bear. This is said to be very good.

All this I can readily believe. Watching seals at the Zoo hauling themselves laboriously out of the water, I have often thought they looked as edible in the natural state as any of God's creatures. Not unlike a largish piece of liver with a small moustache at one end, all ready to be rolled in flour and tossed into the pan. What does surprise me a little is that their blubber, raw, "tastes just like a mixture

of cream and nuts" (page 254 in the Penguin Series, if you doubt me). It would be good, I suppose, coated with chocolate, or stuffed into one of those pastry cornucopias that always contain such a disappointing quantity of air at the thin end. One could have it with strawberries. But would one?

In any case, here is the seal-hunter, tense, poised in his kayak,* harpoon at the ready, all his thoughts and energies concentrated on his next meal. And here am I, sharing his every emotion to the hilt. It is quite extraordinary, the extent to which my thoughts are occupied by the next meal. There is nothing I can do about it. I have no harpoon. But food is my world.

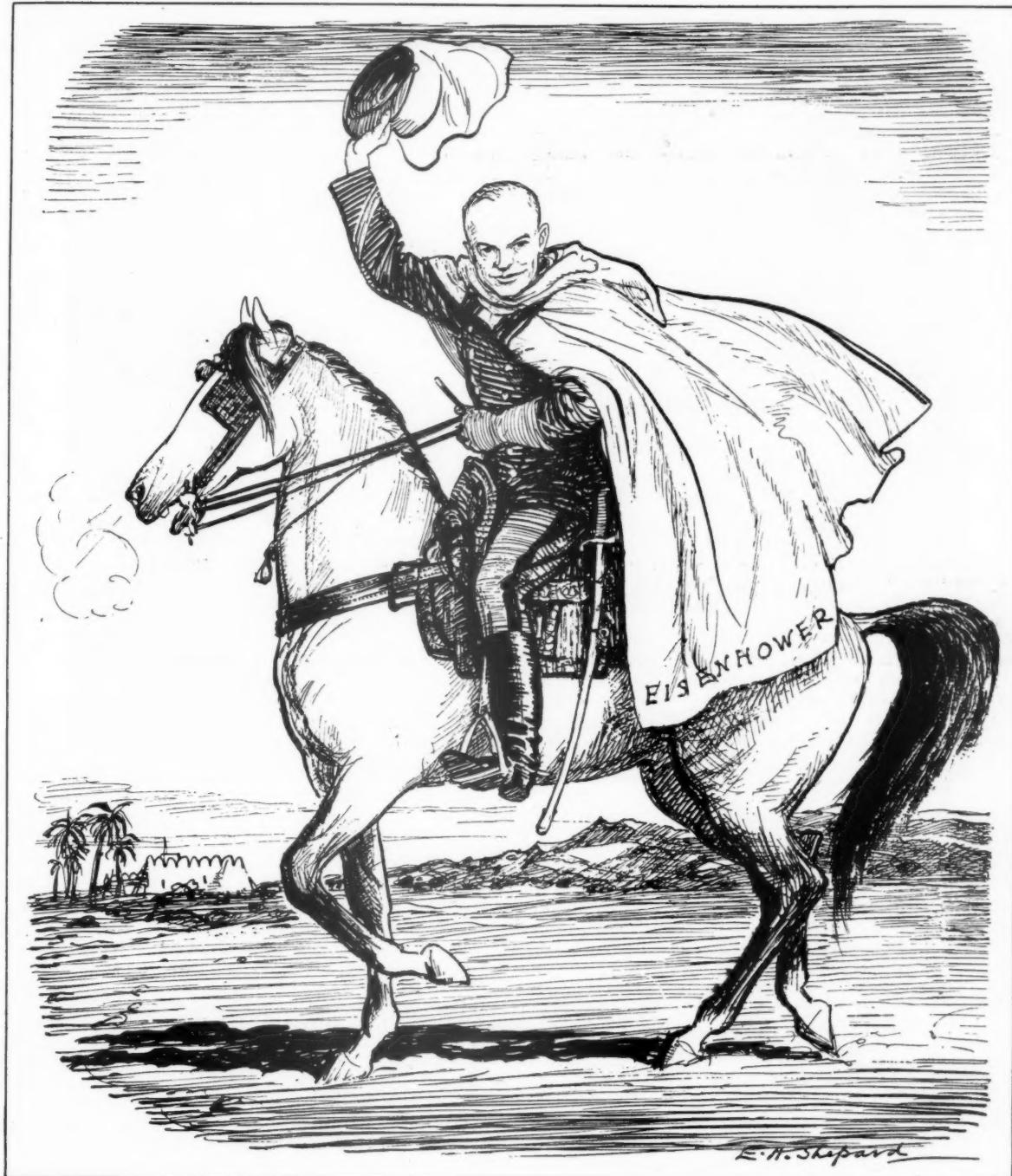
When I wake up in the morning and have washed I think about breakfast. There is not much room for speculation here because breakfast does not vary from day to day by so much as a slice of bread-and-butter. I am reduced to wondering

When will it arrive?
Will the tea be hot?

When will it arrive? This is a matter of the liveliest interest before every meal. I have no watch and no sense of time, and as for the wireless, which I sometimes switch on in an attempt to get my bearings, it appears to play "Pennsylvania Polka" continuously from 8.30 to 12.30, which gives me no clue. The only intimation of the approach of zero hour is the preliminary rattle of crockery in the corridor outside my room. The hospital knows this, I think, and enters into the game with fiendish zest. Take lunch, for instance. I know that it won't be lunch-time until at least an hour-and-a-half after I have had my mid-morning cocoa. Very well. I have my cocoa and settle down to get through the long blank period of waiting. I read a piece in my paper in which some old Bohunkus of a general is bombinating about Burma. Exasperated beyond words by his glib platitudes I raise my clenched fists to heaven—the paper, which has been waiting for an opportunity like this, slides off on to the floor. Having no harpoon I let it lie there. I then take up a *Life of Voltaire*, by someone or other; I always feel, when confined to bed, that such an opportunity to improve my mind may never recur. However, by the time I have read a chapter my mind has been improved to a dangerous extent and I lay Voltaire down and take up Agatha Christie in an endeavour to restore the balance. I also light a Cuban cigarette, the gift of Friends Unknown on Christmas Day. (I am not seriously ill, you perceive, not, at any rate, until I have finished the cigarette.) The house-party is all assembled in the billiard-room and Poirot is accusing each of them in turn (a proceeding which they appear to receive without resentment or indeed comment of any kind), when the unmistakable sound of trolley-wheels and the jingle-jangle-jingle of pottery assaults my sensitive ear. "Already!" I say and hoist myself into a convenient position. I sit tense and quivering. You might think, to look at me, that I was balancing myself in a kayak. Then the door opens and a nurse of very moderate attractions comes in and removes my cocoa-cup. The trolley rumbles on. Figuratively speaking, I am left head-downwards in the Arctic.

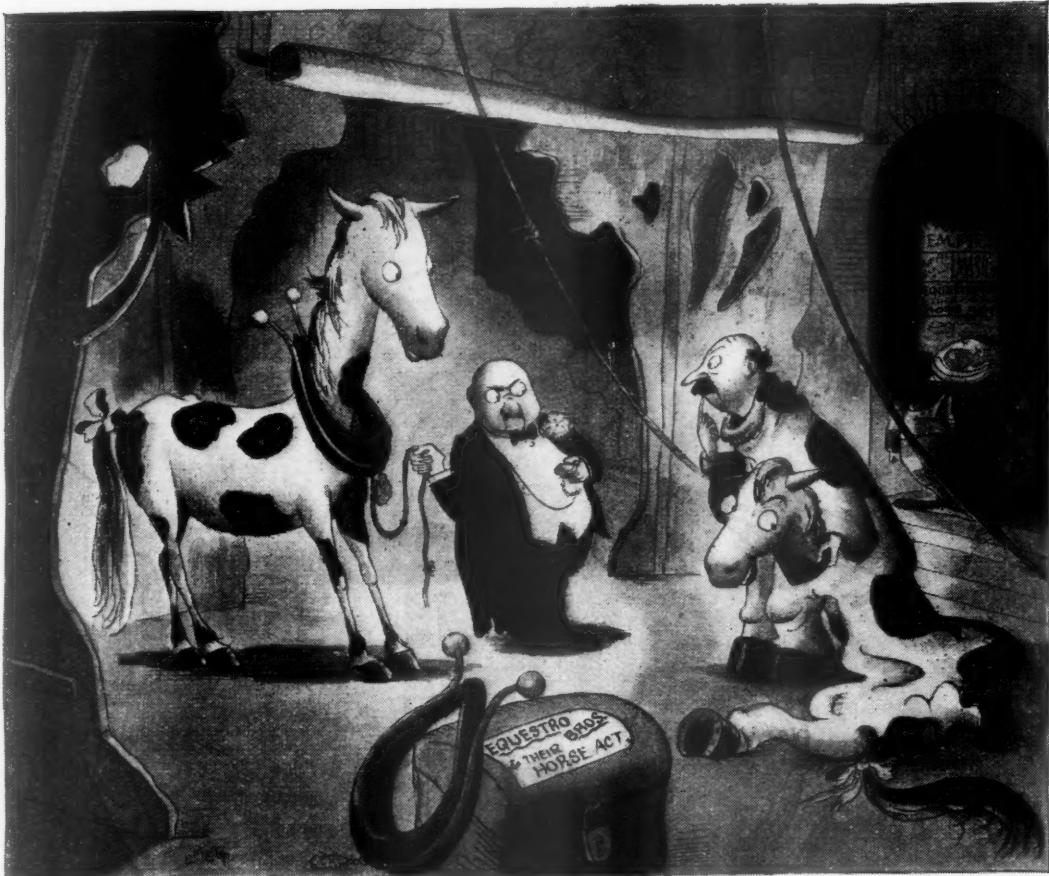
This is the hospital's first joke. It has the effect of

* Kayak. A very tippy canoe.



BEAU GESTE

"Three cheers for the star-spangled tricolor!
Three cheers for the Red, White and Blue!"



"Well, if 'e doesn't come in five minutes, I'll have to use the understudy."

destroying my powers of concentration and I hurl Poirot aside and begin to brood on the possibilities for lunch. These are limited. There won't be guillemot, for instance, or polar bear's liver, because I am on a diet. Pray God there won't be fish. I don't know what it is about hospital fish. I suppose it has been zoned. Be that as it may, I can only say I prefer it grilled.

There *might* be chicken.

There will certainly be rice.

Next time I hear the trolley-wheels approaching I am in a pretty state, I can tell you. My eyes are glaring, my hands clench and unclench themselves about an imaginary knife and fork, my inside is flapping like the flippers of a scared narwhal. I could eat a horse, though I shouldn't like the culinary department to hear me say so....

I wonder if the Sister who wheels in the medicine-trolley realizes how successful her second leg-pull has been.

Of course lunch comes in the end. Even the best practical jokes can't go on for ever.

"Ah, Nurse," I say. "Just a moment while I get this pillow right. Thanks. Now then, what have you got to-day?"

She removes the cover, with that unfailing cheerfulness which has brought, and still brings, so many thousands of patients to the verge of homicidal mania.

"There," she says.

FISH!

When I have finished my fish and my rice I lean back against the pillows with a sigh. There is a contemplative look in my eye. I am thinking about tea.

Which brings me back to breakfast and the second question I then asked and have not yet answered: Will the tea be hot?

Unfortunately I know the answer to this question in advance, but something indomitable, something granite-like in my constitution, weakened as it is by suffering and privation, makes me keep asking it.

Pardon me, but I think I hear a trolley.

H. F. E.

Slow Falls the Eventide.

"The Vicar preached throughout the day on Sunday.... Mrs. —— was the organist throughout the day." —Cambridgeshire Times.

Eyes and No Eyes

YOUR Cousin Florence and I, dear, were at school together as you know, and by one of those extraordinary coincidences we've just been to the oculist together. Your Cousin Florence, in the old days at St. Lobelia's, was always two or three years my senior and is so still, and that makes it all the more peculiar that we should have found—practically on the same day and at the same hour—that we required slightly stronger reading-glasses. Though, as the man said, your Cousin Florence would be all the better for using bi-focal lenses."

"Did you go to Mr. Calloway?"

"That's what I said, dear. Mr. Calloway. The man. Well, the man kept us waiting, as they always do just to show how busy they are, and as I said to your Cousin Florence: 'If you have to hold the *Strand Magazine* for April 1937 at that angle, Florence, it shows that you've not come a moment too soon.' Personally, I read nothing whatever, but simply made out the engravings on the wall—particularly one of either Joan of Arc on a charger, or St. George and the Dragon—when the man appeared. I think he had some idea of taking us separately, in the way fortune-tellers always insist upon doing, but I just said, without a word, that we'd come together and wished to be done together, and went perfectly quietly into his room and sat down on a chair. And instinct must have led me to it, dear, because exactly opposite—only much too far away—was one of those extraordinary affairs with all the letters of the alphabet in the wrong order. So without a moment's hesitation I quickly memorized them, knowing that he meant to try to catch me out over them."

"But was that quite a good idea, Miss Littlemug?"

"Candidly, dear, no. Because the man—and I'm bound to say it was rather intelligent of him—twirled the board round, and there was quite a different set of letters. So I simply said, very quietly indeed: 'F P A Z T L M.'"

"And was that right?"

"Absolutely, dear. Even the man didn't attempt to deny it. He merely asked me to read the next to him. 'A V L X N D Y,' I said—as calmly as I'm speaking now."

"And was it?"

"That, dear, must remain a matter of opinion. Personally, I shall always be convinced that it was. The man

said that the V was a Y and that I hadn't got the last two letters quite right, but I doubt whether he was paying full attention. We went on like that for some little time, and then he took to whisking various lenses in and out of one eye and asking if it was better or worse. And it was always worse."

"Miss Littlemug, it couldn't have been."

"Yes, dear, it could. Your Cousin Florence always seemed to be the only thing I was looking at, and she was never anything but completely blurred. There really was a moment when the man seemed to be quite in despair, and I was too, and your poor Cousin Florence told me afterwards she became so nervous that she was convinced I was actually blind for life and began to wonder if one could ever train poor little Bengy to be one of those marvellous dogs who watch the traffic lights and take one across. So that it was a great relief to all of us when the man suddenly produced a card with some absurdly small print on it and asked me to read aloud. 'But why *Gulliver's Travels*?' I said. Naturally, he couldn't tell me. But you see the position I was in, dear."

"Not exactly, Miss Littlemug."

"At any moment I might find myself reading, or rather not reading, about those two countries that Gulliver visited after Lilliput. And neither I nor anybody else in the world knows how to pronounce them. But as my Scottish relations themselves have

always said about me from childhood, I have foresight, and I saw the whole thing coming. So I told the man that it was perfectly impossible for me to read it at all."

"What did he say?"

"He said that my sight was in a most peculiar condition, dear, and he wanted to know if I'd suffered from nervous shock lately. And very shortly afterwards he gave me another card altogether and there was *David Copperfield*, that I read regularly once a year and know almost entirely by heart. Your Cousin Florence remarked very charmingly afterwards on the amount of feeling that I put into my reading."

"And what did the oculist remark?"

"That I'd come to the age, as he rather strangely put it, when stronger glasses were indicated and that owing to war conditions I should probably have to wait three or four weeks for them."

"How did Cousin Florence get on?"

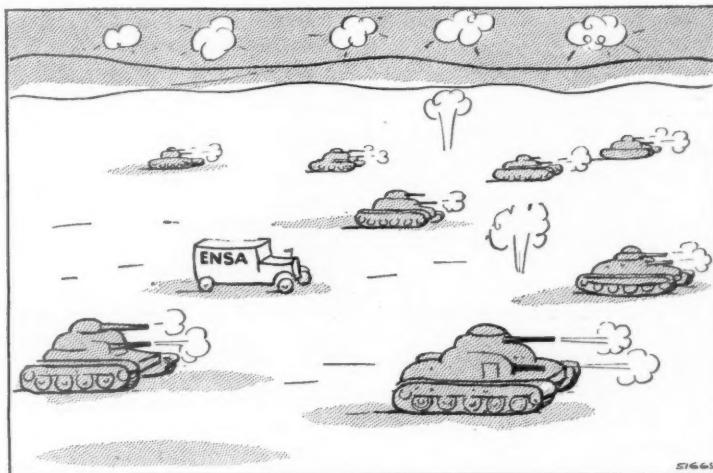
"I couldn't say, dear. I did my utmost for her by prompting her over the letters on the board, but she wasn't at all quick at understanding me. In fact, I've offered to go with her to the aerist next week." E. M. D.

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This Robot Age

"Good Horse, Complete with Saddle and Bridle, 6 volts battery, Pistons. Piston rings, connecting rods, etc. . . ."

Advt. in "Nigerian Times."





"Is this the queue for the No. 34 bus?"

Little Talks

WHAT's your view of the Cosmic Mess this morning? What's the betting on Global Regeneration in 1943?

My dear fellow! Ask the astrologers! Can't. You seem to have driven them from the field.

There have been a good many casualties. And we shall always be proud that we struck the first blow. But there's still Mr. L— of *The P—*. Have you studied him this morning?

No. I never can get it. And Mr. L—, I'm told, is the cause.

Maybe. I believe they eat him. And I confess he's a most insidious drug. There are Sundays when even I get a guilty kick out of him. Listen to this: "The clear-out from Africa, also due shortly—"

"Shortly"?

"Shortly"—will add to strain and impatience in the Third Reich."

Very comforting. But what is meant by "shortly"?

Can't say.

Surely the stars should be more precise than that?

The stars are not mentioned nowa-

days. The heading is just "L— Tells You."

What would happen to a leader-writer, statesman, or military expert who wrote: "A German clear-out from North Africa is due shortly"?

First, he would be lynched for "complacency." Secondly, he would be imprisoned for careless talk.

What else does he say?

Speaking of Russia, he says: "The biggest and most successful push will arrive when everyone expects a slowing down. In February. No similarity to last year's standstill will come."

Grand!

Yes, but if he's right, ought he to tell the Germans? It may be part of the Russian plan to make them count on a slow-down.

Oh, you mustn't take him too seriously.

If he's not to be taken seriously he shouldn't be allowed to say these things at all. And remember that some time ago he did "predict" a Russian offensive a very few days before it happened.

Jolly good show.

Not a bit. What would happen to

me if I predicted a British offensive a few days before it happened?

I see what you mean. Still, as you say, he cheers you up. What about the birthday stuff?

The personal predictions? Not quite so cheery. That's the odd thing—the general predictions lead to the conclusion that the war is practically over; and the individual stuff, as a rule, makes you think that it's not much worth your while to make any particular effort. Listen:

"SATURDAY—"

That means if your birthday's next Saturday?

Yes. "SATURDAY—Dull year. Wisest to keep to normal routine."

Not very stimulating for Victory Year, is it? What about the rest of the week?

SUNDAY is: "Business interests drag." TUESDAY is: "Be content with quiet progress on normal lines" and WEDNESDAY: "Keep to familiar ground in business."

Goodness, what a week!

THURSDAY is a little better. If your birthday is on Thursday—

As it happens, mine was.

Well, you will have an "Exciting year—"

Hooray!

"Exciting year, but advise care where occupational changes are in question. Experiments work out badly."

Oh, dear!

"Be sure of your position before taking risks." On the whole, therefore, your prospects seem to coincide pretty sharply with those of the unfortunates who were born on Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

But that's five days! D'you mean to say that nobody born this week—

No. Let us be fair. If you were born on Monday—

Which I wasn't.

Careless of you. Because in that case, though you should not "count on immediate results, whole atmosphere is favourable for progress." Friday, too. If only you had taken the obvious precaution of being born on Friday instead of on Thursday, you could look forward to "a year of steady achievement—"

Cheers!

"But results depend on your initiative."

Ah. There's a catch in it.

No, I'm delighted by that. For it's the first—the only suggestion in the whole week that initiative and what-not are desirable or useful. To sum up these prognostications, six-sevenths of the citizens born this week (who number, I suppose, about three-quarters of a million) are advised to

go slow and cautiously and expect little result from their personal exertions, not merely this week but throughout the year. Is that a good thing, in time of war?

Oh, well, who believes it?

I don't know. But if nobody believes it why print it? If anybody does believe it—if anybody believes that the whole course of their business year depends on the accident of their birthday falling on Friday instead of Thursday, then—

Then what?

Then—then all I can say is, for the credit of British journalism, thank goodness there are not many who think fit to make a living by feeding folly in this particular manner.

On Sunday, too. By the way, are you going to vote for a Continental Sunday?

What d'you mean? We have a Continental Sunday.

Oh, come!

The newspapers are published and sold—and, indeed, in some cases, printed—on Sundays. Public places of refreshment are open for the sale of food and alcoholic liquor. Trains, buses and trams are run. Any sort of game (except public billiards) can lawfully be played. Public concerts are held. Dramatic entertainment can be provided in the cinema—whenever the local citizens desire it. The B.B.C. is providing entertainment (with brief intervals for instruction or religion) for seventeen hours—much of it, by the way, dramatic entertainment in the form of straight plays or musical "variety."

But—

One moment. Mr. John Gielgud can be seen playing *Hamlet* on the films; he can give a public lecture about *Hamlet*; he can give recitations from *Hamlet*: indeed, if he pleases, he can gather a number of actors about him and give a complete reading of the play. It is not till he puts on make-up and wears a costume suitable for *Hamlet* that the law says he is at fault, and certain sincere and well-meaning people apprehend the arrival of the Continental Sunday. It is a case, I fear, of shutting the stable door—

When the horse is out of sight?

Certainly. I suppose I shall have to start on *The Times* again.

"The Times"?

Years ago, I made all the necessary preparation to prosecute *The Times* on a charge of alleged unlawful labour on the Sabbath.

But "*The Times*" doesn't come out on Sunday.

No. But it comes out on Monday. And too many good people forget about Monday's *Times*.

A. P. H.

The Phoney Phleet

IV—H.M.S. Parphrase

COMMANDER Ginger Coot was bald. His eyelashes alone recalled the promise that the infant down laid fleetingly upon his crown, and they were red. He wore a wig of near-vermilion.

In this rig He paced the bridge of *Parphrase* On all but *really* windy days; His toupet couldn't face a gale, And more than Seven (Beaufort Scale) Kept him below decks. Knowing same,

The Admiralty played the game By sending him to placid seas.

One forenoon, in a gentle breeze, They saw a German A.M.C. (Armed Merchant Cruiser). Instantly The *Parphrase* set urgent chase, Exchanging, in a headlong race, That wig-retentive latitude For one where elements were crude, So when at last they closed with Fritz The weather had become a blitz.

The guns were laid, torpedoes manned, When Coot abruptly raised his hand And shouted through a megaphone "Belay! Avast! Secure! Ochone! Full Speed Astern! Away the gig! All hands on deck! I've lost my wig! Wig overboard!!"

I will not stress The very real unhappiness This caused the whole ship's company. Within an ace of victory, Of landing something jolly big, And then to lose it by a wig!

They set a saddened course for port And Ginger had to face a Court. He made a spirited defence, And called supporting evidence To prove that under no duress May officers ignore their dress, But must maintain a proper rig; And his of course comprised his wig. He'd had two courses—lose the Hun Or lose his wig. He chose the one Which brought less evil in its train Since it allowed him to maintain The prestige of the Royal N.

The Court adjourned for dinner; then Returned, remarking that they found Coot's pleading absolutely sound, And said the Navy's dignity Was safe when fellows such as he Commanded H.M. ships. What's more They made the chap a Commodore.

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"SWEET COOK, female."—Advt. in "Daily Telegraph."
Well, naturally.



"There's Rover with his wretched bone."



"Ab—but what does Beveridge offer you for loss by fire, flood, drought or earthquake?"

Hot-Water Festival

IN these stern days, what wealth is retrospect—
Pure gold which from Time's robberies we retrieve!
I wonder, William, if you recollect
How we came down from Vorlich one wild eve,
Down from the freezing wind and whizzing snow
To baths and supper at the inn below?

Up on the tops how bitter blew the gale,
Whipping the drift like smoke from height to height,
Half blinding us who, stiff in icy mail,
Found every forward step a fiercer fight
Where in one whiteness all was merged and dim
In cold confusion. Vorlich can be grim!

Do you recall how for first bath we tossed
And how, to my sincere delight, you won?
I had no need to hurry, having lost,
As you, with sporting selflessness, had done
And turned the tap for me the bath to fill
Where I might linger wallowing at will?

That was a bath by no restriction spoiled;
With conscience clear I watched the level rise,
And in the genial depths grew pink, parboiled,
While steam obscured the ceiling from my eyes.
Such was a climber's tub before the war—
Surely alone a bliss worth fighting for? W. K. H.

H. J. Talking

IN response to requests I shall now print another short extract from *Gay Times Up West*.

CHAPTER III

"Alas, alas, alack, alack, alas."—Blank verse translation from the Greek.

Over the fells heavy storm-clouds presaged the doom of summer. The snow which blanketed the ground did much the same. Through the winding streets the gnarled legs of farmers scurried crabwise. Here and there bulls tossed unwary strangers, some high, some low, depending on their weight. In the public bar of the Wilberforce Arms many conversations were proceeding in dialect, but as we are not very good at this it is to the saloon bar that we shall conduct the reader.

"Am I right in assuming that the price of wheat is likely to augment by 1½d. per bushel?" queried a hard-faced figure in cap and gown; headmaster of Calcraft's Foundation was he, and a muscular scholar of great renown, having twice won the Headmasters' Conference Open Medal for his prowess with the rod. Before anyone could reply a disruptive influence intruded on the convivial scene. It was the sinister Alderman Gregory, whom we last saw behaving mysteriously in the Almshouse kitchen, and previous to that so doing in the Archery Club, two sheepfolds and The Villa Vanilla. Caressing his sagging jowl with mitten hand he bent a piercing gaze on the company and murmured "There are some as would do with a bashing: don't say as how it is unexpected when it comes." "Names, names," cried all present, but the crafty alderman was not to be drawn into a premature disclosure of his plans. Ordering hot hock he proceeded to read quietly from a small black note-book, apparently oblivious to the hostile looks he received from every side.

At this moment an unearthly shriek rang through the rafters. Drops of blood began to fall from the ceiling. "There will be no jam for the next three days," muttered the headmaster in an absent-minded attempt to deal with the situation. "Drinks on the house, gentlemen!" cried the landlord, making a vain attempt to live up to his reputation of jollity by doing a little tap-dance in the corner of the bar, but perturbation had made its icy presence felt, and even the hand-bell-ringers in their accustomed corner

THEY THAT GO DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS

AS you may well imagine, this is about the worst time of the year to be at sea, and so at this time such articles as you send are a genuine comfort to me."

Now more than ever before are we dependent for our livelihood upon the courage and steadfastness of our gallant crews "that go down to the sea in ships." You, by your generous gifts to the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, can help to alleviate their sufferings, and to make their task less arduous. We rely on you because we know that, like them, you will not let us down. All donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouvierie Street, London, E.C.4.



"Would you mind letting your hair down, please?"

faltered in their efforts to follow the instructions of the Young Squire, who was teaching them *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*.

To some people the situation would have seemed one for activity and bustle, but such is not the way in the milieu of our tale. It was a quarter of an hour or more before the proper course of action had been decided upon by those present, the only definite move being the placing in position of several flower-pots to catch the blood which continued to descend from the ceiling. Finally a programme was drawn up on the landlord's slate as follows:-

- (a) Test the fastenings of the windows—
 - (1) Here.
 - (2) Elsewhere.
- (b) Notify the Press.
- (c) Search Sidney (a very small, tame drinker who sat quietly in the corner).
- (d) Send for the public vaccinator in case of smallpox and Mother O'Flanagan in case of banshees.
- (e) Take an exact note of the time.
- (f) Votes of thanks.

These projected steps, however, were rendered outmoded by the entry of the landlord's wife to announce closing-time.

Meanwhile on a windswept hillside sheep-stealing was in progress. The annual contest was being judged by a celebrated sheep-stealer from North Wales. Every deserted quarry for miles around was the scene of intense activity. Dark lanterns formed oases of gloom in the brilliant moonlight. Old brands were cancelled and new ones forged, some sheep being almost completely covered, so many times had they changed hands in the course of this wild night. Travelling hucksters moved from spot to spot selling hot chestnuts, patent medicines, packets of lavender and improving fiction. Gay crowds of pleasure-seekers from the great houses round about strolled with laughing arrogance

among the throng. Our heroine was at that moment engaged in administering Tibb's Charity, which provided a bowl of soup, a reel of cotton and a hundredweight of hearthstone for any sheep-stealer who had reached the age of seventy and could pass a simple examination in *Henry VI* (Part II), *Piers Plowman*, and Burke's *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents*. Battered by the storm, worn by the necessity of producing fresh questions for each candidate, as the examination was oral and very public, our heroine was nigh to fainting when she felt a manly arm support her and a manly opera-hat fan even more wind into her aching face.

She glanced up and found herself looking straight into the eyes of the Mysterious Archdeacon. Overcome with confusion all she could say was "I didn't know the clergy wore opera-hats." "This is almost a shovel hat when closed and has strings at the side when opened," he answered in a hurt voice. "But you are faint, let us sit out quietly until you have recovered your poise." "This is a granite quarry," she replied sadly. "If it were some soft stone, like sandstone, I might accept your invitation." Suddenly there was a mighty roar accompanied by yells, and shouts of "The Dam has broken," "It's the police," "Mob rule has raised its ugly head." Evil was yet once again being organized by our brilliant, capable and ingenious villain.

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The Tongue that Shakespeare Spake

WHOLESALE—A Wholesaler will be defined for each commodity as a primary wholesaler who does not sell any of that commodity to traders owned by or associated with him, or, in the case of any commodity a wholesaler not more than 25% of whose trade in that commodity consists of sales to traders owned by or associated with him.—From an Official Circular.



"... and my fur gloves—I am staying in this afternoon."



"I can't think how you can be so careless, Alice—the tin was clearly marked 'Trinitrotoluol'."

Ghosts

EVENING drew on, and down the quiet street
I seemed to hear an unfamiliar beat,
The lagging tittup of a pony's feet,

And slowly plodding on its homeward way
Beside me passed a little four-wheeled shay,
A shabby relic of Victoria's day

Such as our great-aunts used to take the air
When just for once they could no longer bear
Carriage and coachman and the formal pair.

But now the paint was dull, the reins were slack;
Steered by a rough-haired boy it carried back
Victuals and such to some outlying shack.

Then even as I gazed there came about
A sudden magic on the whole turn-out;
I looked again; I rubbed my eyes in doubt;

The shay was trim and smart, the harness shone,
A well-groomed pony trotted briskly on;
The rations and the shaggy boy had gone,

And in their place two rigid ladies sat;
Their high-built hair supported each a hat
Of old-time shape; their backs were stern and flat.

Silent, aloof, remote, they took the air—
Somebody's great-aunts, as no doubt they were
One moment—and the next they were not there.

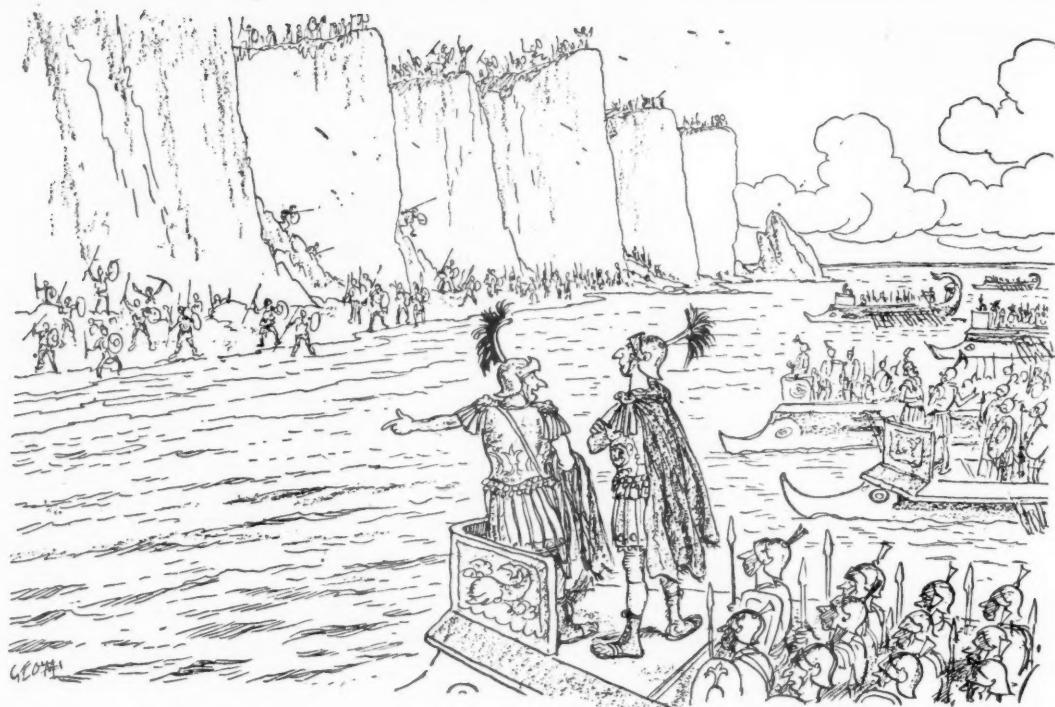
Only I heard the pony's lagging gait;
The shabby shay bore home its weekly freight
Steered by a slumberous boy with rough-haired pate.

And so it went. But I henceforth can boast—
And mean to—that I've really seen a ghost,
Or anyway have been as near as most. DUM-DUM.



SERVICE

"I hope you've had sufficient, Sir: it's not always an easy job to bring it."



"That's fifteen sesterces you owe me—I told you it was Britain we were bound for."

Industrial Relations

XIV

NOW that Mass-Observation has published the results of its inquiry into British war production I see no reason why I should continue to withhold my findings relating to the health of our war workers. One trained observer may often see and interpret more than the mass. Without in any way belittling the work of my contemporaries I would point out that what they observe is so obviously a set-up designed for their inspection. The mass cannot be furtive or subtle—the individual can. Hence the poignancy and point of my contribution. My reluctance to publish was not so much due to a widespread editorial stupidity as to my inborn squeamishness. Even now I hesitate to draw back the veil and to reveal the macabre horror of industrial disease. To those of you who cannot stand the sight of blood I say, "Enough! No more: 'Tis not so sweet now as it was before." Is there a doctor in the periodical?

I propose to confine my attention

to those diseases which are responsible for the small amount of absenteeism at the Snacker and Diplocket Small Things Co. (1928), Ltd. Diseases flourish when resistance is poor, and the marked increase in malnutrition due to the continued dilution of beer must be considered as one of the greatest evils of our times. Experiments made with ants (for reasons of economy mice were not used) have convinced me that modern beer is an unsuitable diet for manual workers. My researches prove that the energy expended in the effort of drinking is greater than that derived from the liquid, so that there is a cumulative loss. I recommend that manual workers be compelled by law or induced by propaganda to forgo the use of beer and that supplies be diverted to clerical and managerial personnel. In a crisis it is always the black-coated workers who pull the nation through. They would, I feel sure, suffer atrophy gladly in the national interest.

Readers who were able to see the

Chaplin film *Modern Times* will already be familiar with the distressing symptoms of the disease known as *Ado agitato* or "Fitters' Jitters." The constant repetition of a series of manual operations sets up a reflexive system of muscular rhythms which continues to operate even though the original impulse (work) is withdrawn. Of course we are all sufferers from this ailment in a more or less mild form. We draw up our chairs to empty fires, stir our sugarless tea and try to knock the tops off dried eggs. But with the workers the complaint assumes more serious proportions. I will quote one example from a letter which appeared recently in my Suggestions Box: "My husband operates an overhead trolley-crane in your factory. When he arrives home in the evening he is terribly restless. He takes the milk-jug and oils the radio, the sideboard drawers and Van Gogh's 'Cypresses.' Then he throws himself into the arm-chair, grabs the poker and levers it backwards until the chair topples over. Shouting

'O.K. Bill, let 'er go,' he leaps at the chandelier and swings across to the book-case. Every few minutes he stumbles over to the tall-boy and mumbles something about a second front and workers' control. By ten o'clock he is completely exhausted and must be carried to bed. Now this is not at all natural and I am very worried. What do you advise?' Manual workers are not the only victims of "Fitters' Jitters." It is prevalent among politicians. Under the strain of war many of them may be heard talking long after the original stimulus (having something to say) has left them.

We come next to the malignant disease, *Auricular Neurosis* (sometimes known as "Welders' Bonus"). It is most common among riveters, capstan-minders and crèche attendants—a fact which seems to suggest that excessive noise may be the primary cause. As the victim becomes inured to the factory din more and more decibels are demanded to satisfy the craving for sound. During working hours this can usually be arranged, but the extra-mural activities of the victim are painful indeed. Anything less noisy than a siren, a Wurlitzer organ or a Post-War Reconstruction Committee meeting seems to occasion acute discomfort. In particular, noises made by scratching the finger-nail on frosted-glass, by the flapping of loose wallpaper, by squeaking shoes and by meticulous shop-foremen induce a state of *malaise* bordering on frenzy. B.B.C. requests to turn down our wireless sets and the continued apathy of the *Luftwaffe* in the West have made night-time almost unbearable for sufferers from this disease. Early treatment is essential. At the first hint of head-noises (not to be confused with income-tax computations and Music While You Work) a doctor should be consulted.

Lastly, I wish to mention one of the latest yet most pernicious of industrial maladies. It is not so much a disease as a whole genus of diseases due entirely to the activities of black marketeers. These undesirables peddle their wares in factories where the gregarious instinct looms large and where fatigue and zeal preclude too close an inspection of the wares. The traffic in cosmetics, unguents and food-stuffs is considerable and goes on right under the noses of indolent officials. Without exception these shoddy goods are harmful to their users. When analysed, black-market nail-varnish is seen to consist of ninety-nine per cent. fish-paste (red herring), while mascara appears to contain nothing more than powdered torch-battery. I have seen

damson stones masquerading as halitosis pastilles and ground-glass as an aperient. I have myself been offered motor-tyres manufactured from ear-plugs. The most insidious of these concoctions are the subtly-scented soaps which are sold exclusively to labourers and haulage operatives. Here surely is the hand of the Fifth Column. These cunning odours make strong men dreamy-eyed and maudlin, as emasculated as Ferdinand the Bull, and quite useless to the war effort.

Prelude and Performance

XII—The Unwelcome Guest

ISUPPOSE you realize we shall have to have Maud for Christmas?"

"What, again?"

"I'm afraid we must, dear. I've had a pathetic letter from Angela practically begging us to invite her. They have her all the year round. I really think we must take our turn."

"I suppose it's only fair, really. Shall I have to play chess with her every evening?"

"At least you're away in the daytime. I have her all day, telling me what I ought to do in the garden, and how badly I'm bringing up the children. I haven't dared break it to them yet that she's coming."

"Well, impose a limit, that's all I ask. We don't want her staying over and spoiling our New Year's Eve again."

"No fear. I'll be firm about *that* this time."

* * * * *

"DEAREST MAUD,—It's much too long since we saw you, and I am wondering if you can repeat your lovely visit of last Christmas? Geoffrey and I—and of course the children—would so love it if you could come from Dec. 21st to the Monday, 28th. Alas! we can't keep you over New Year, as we shall be maidless."

Geoffrey is looking forward to more battles on the chess-board, and there are heaps of things I want your advice about in the garden.

I do so hope you can come—and will come down by the 5.15 with Geoffrey, as we only have a dribble of petrol and I daren't take the car out too often.

With love from us all,

Yours affec.,

STELLA.

P.S.—If you could bring rations it would be marvellous."

"Of course, my dear, of *course*, Maud has chosen a morning train, which means that I shall have to take the car out twice, *and* have her here for lunch."

"Let her take a taxi."

"How can I, when she hasn't got a bean? No, I must meet her. It's absolutely infuriating, though."

"Did you remind her to bring rations this time?"

"I did. If she forgets again I shall be really angry."

"Well, all I hope is that she doesn't bring as much luggage as last visit. At least three enormous suitcases I lugged up to the spare-room."

"All I hope is that she'll occasionally go to her own room, instead of taking my arm-chair, and always wanting the wireless on every minute of the day."

"To say nothing of smoking us out of hearth and home . . ."

* * * * *

"Well, it is nice to be here again. And this room looks cosier than ever."

"It's lovely to have you, Maud. . . . Where will you sit?"

"Here, may I—or is this your favourite arm-chair, Stella?"

"No, no, no, of course not, Maud. Geoffrey, give Maud another cigarette."

"Oh, thank you, Geoffrey. . . . It seems a shame to take yours."

"Rather not. I've got plenty . . . go on, Maud."

"I meant to buy some coming through London, but I had such hundreds of things to get as it was—I'm afraid Geoffrey must be exhausted carrying up my suitcases!"

"Good Lord, no, they were quite light."

"Turn the wireless on, will you Geoff . . . Maud, I see a little parcel on the hall-table which I take to be rations. You are an angel to have remembered them."

"Oh, my dear! Oh, how can I have been so stupid——?"

"Aren't they— Oh, but it doesn't matter one scrap."

"The last thing I said to Pam—really my brain must be going."

"My dear Maud, don't give it a thought! We've got heaps. It's only because I saw the parcel I thought . . ."

"That is some tiny New Year celebrations. I know you're maidless, but my dear, of course I can do my own room and help with washing-up and anything—if you'd like me to stay, that is."

"But, of *course*, Maud. We'd love it—wouldn't we, Geoffrey?"

"Rather, Maud. That's splendid."

M. D.



OUT-SWUNG

Thoughts on Seeing a Sheep

IT was a beautiful day as I set out to catch the 1.50 p.m., and I had the road to myself. A mellow winter sun intensified the tracery of the trees and seemed to imbue everything with gold, I was thinking when I saw the sheep.

It was a short distance in front of me, pattering along in the same direction. It was not one of those pretty, cream-coloured sheep seen in the story-book illustrations, being almost black and just teazled. Apparently it had broken out from its field, and my first thought was that I must put it back, until I remembered that if I did that I should miss my train. Moreover, it occurred to me—rather comfortingly, I admit—that I did not know where its field was. I did survey the landscape, but although there were a number of fields they were all sheepless. So there was no guide. And no gates. Only hedges.

I thought that the best thing to do would be to let someone not keeping an appointment look after the sheep,

so I sought to overtake and pass it. But this it would not permit me to do. Pavement only flanks one side of our semi-rustic road at this particular stretch, the earlier inhabitants of these parts not having cared a lot for variety, and the sheep was just in front of me on it. I put on little bursts of speed—but so did the sheep.

A distance of about ten yards persisted between us for longer than I really liked. When I hastened the sheep hastened. It slowed down when I did. In this manner we came abreast of some houses with gardens stretching down to the road and I thought that if people happened to be looking through a window they would think I was tending the sheep, although it might look odd, me being in a bowler hat and with yellow gloves and a brief-satchel.

In any case I stopped. So did the

sheep. As it had its back to me the whole of the time I thought that if I walked diagonally across the road on my heels the rubbers would prevent any noise. I almost lost my balance once or twice, being without a parasol, but I was relieved to find the move efficacious. I passed the sheep on the other side of the road and, cutting sharply forward back to the pavement, got in front.

I now bowed happily along thinking that everything was all right, until I heard a pattering behind me. The sheep was following at about the same distance of ten yards. I knew that by some means I must rid myself of it before reaching the railway station, otherwise I should have difficulty in persuading the ticket-collector that it was not mine.

So I turned round with the idea of commanding it to be off. The sheep stopped and took up a new stance, that of standing at right angles to me. I opened my mouth but soon realized that I did not know the word of

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Have you got my resignation down on the agenda?"

command for a sheep. Actually I had never seen a shepherd except on the films, and then they mostly posed looking across gates. I racked my brains but in the end was compelled to coin an imperative of my own. "Peesh!" I hissed, proper vicious.

The sheep was totally unmoved and I was forced to proceed in the direction of the railway station. The pattering behind me recommenced. I began to wonder what length of time must pass before I became so inured to it that I would not hear it till it stopped, like a clock in a room. Then I became slightly depressed until the thought occurred to me that the situation could be relieved by right thinking. I had read a book on the subject not long before, and here was the opportunity of a little practice.

The corners of my lips twitched and I broke into a wide smile. The matter only wanted putting in its right perspective. The end of the world had not come because I was being followed by a sheep! Things would go on just the same. What were the affairs of a particle like me viewed against the background of the cosmic whole? Men had been followed by sheep before. . .

At this stage I realized that only my own footsteps sounded on the pavement. I turned quickly. The sheep had vanished, but I heard a loud rustle on my left. Looking over a thick privet hedge I perceived that it had passed through an open garden gate and was floundering among a bed

of late chrysanthemums. Stealthily, I stole back and closed the gate.

I hurried towards my train solaced by the thought that had the bed been cabbages I would willingly have borne the sheep. But what were chrysanthemums in war-time? Furthermore, there was a faint possibility that I had done the man who owned the garden a good turn. He might have lost the sheep.



"Now, THERE'S an idea for an article: 'Teaspoons—A Quaint Survival.'"

From Middle East

IT was admitted, Tom,
On every hand
You were of all our Mess
Most richly tanned;

Indeed, as someone said
But yester'en,
A bronze Egyptian god
You might have been.

Your face, your neck, your arms,
And eke your knees—
Not one of us but shared
Your pride in these.

Alas, O Thomas! where's
That bronze god now?
No ruddier than mine
Those knees, that brow;

Gone the mahogany
Of neck and cheeks—
Gone with the first hot bath
For thirteen weeks. A. W. B.

○ ○

"The thought of them would sweeten a mess of lintels."—*Toronto Paper*.
Wood it?

○ ○

"The house, containing two public rooms, three bedrooms, and other accommodation, has an assessed rental of £35."—*Scottish Paper*.
Too much.

At the Play

"THE ROMANCE OF DAVID GARRICK"
(ST. JAMES'S)
"THE DRUNKARD" (ARTS)

AWAY back in the year 1864 there was first acted, at the Haymarket, a romantic play called *David Garrick*. The play-bill gave its portentous source as follows: "Adapted by T. W. Robertson from the French of *Sullivan*, which was founded on a German Dramatization of a pretended Incident in Garrick's Life." The St. James's programme to-day ought, very strictly speaking, to give all these obligations, instead of which it says quite simply: "A Romantic Comedy in Three Acts by Constance Cox." The "incident," in case the reader should have forgotten it, is that *David Garrick*, after a dinner-party, pretends to be a drunken boor in order to shake a silly girl called *Ada Ingots* out of her playgoerish infatuation for him. That makes both the old and the new play's theatrically effective Second Act. In the less impressive Third, *Ada*, cast out of love like a fish on to a bank, is suddenly washed back into love by the ungovernable wave of *Garrick's* all-the-time pent-up passion, and is obviously meant to be his for life at happy Curtain-fall.

Playgoers have always been ready to ignore the facts that the real Mrs. GARRICK was originally a Viennese dancer called EVA VIEGEL (*Ada*, the city merchant's daughter, being apparently a figment in the mind of that original German dramatist); that Mrs. GARRICK was a handsome woman of considerable strength of mind and character (whereas *Ada*, though pretty, is invertebrate, feeble, and wan); that Mrs. GARRICK long survived her husband, lived to applaud EDMUND KEAN, and died in 1822 in her ninety-eighth year (whereas *Ada* would obviously have been frightened to death at the first night of KEAN's *Richard III*, even had she had the stamina to live to see it). Why have playgoers always been so ready to swallow this gross distortion of historic

truth in the shape of a pleasant eighteenth-century comedy? Wholly because that celebrated scene of simulated drunkenness has always been an irresistible temptation to the irresistible kind of actor—SOTHERN, WYNDHAM, MARTIN-HARVEY, to name only a few who have done it in London and up and down the country these sixty or seventy years—who knows how to drive his countless admirers like sheep over the sentimental cliff, irresistibly.

It is only those resisting persons, the

they are well felt, are delivered with a heaviness of intensity remarkable in one whose touch as a comedian is so light."

Does this original stricture apply to the newest version and to Mr. DONALD WOLFIT who appears in it? It does to the play, but not altogether to the player. That last sentence, indeed, must almost be reversed to fit Mr. WOLFIT's case. He is a tragedian, whereas SOTHERN was the most mercurial of comedians. We might rather say that Mr. WOLFIT's serious passages

are noticeably well felt, and are delivered with a heaviness of intensity not at all remarkable in one whose touch as a comedian is never very light. Fortunately Mrs. COX's readjustment tends to keep the play on the heavy side, and also jettisons a good deal of incidental comic business which would creak badly on to-day's stage.

This is, on the whole, a careful and effective readjustment. It was ingenious, for example, to make the Second Act take place in *Garrick's* house, and not at *Simon Ingots*'s as in the old play. *Ingots*'s guests were a stuttering or affected little band who would be an embarrassment to-day. *Garrick's* are his fellow-players *Quin* and *Macklin*, *Mrs. Pritchard* and *Mrs. Clive*. The many histrionic allusions of these famous personages are remarkably accurate in time and in character. Only the more pedantic sort of scholars will question them anywhere. We cannot.

QUIN, whose career was far more romantic than

GARRICK's, deserves another play all to himself. Mr. ERIC MAXON does well by this one's dignified sketch of him, and Miss CLARE HARRIS does well by *Pritchard*, though she hides that tragedienne's low upbringing far better than Dr. JOHNSON said she did in real life.

At the Arts Theatre, nightly at nine, they are burlesquing a bad old American temperance drama called *The Drunkard*. This is amusing up to a point, though that point occurred for us soon after the interval. Burlesques should last an hour. The wittiest of them all, SHERIDAN's *Critic*, lasts half an hour too long in the theatre. A.D.



ART OVERCOMING NATURE

James Quin	MR. ERIC MAXON
David Garrick	MR. DONALD WOLFIT
Ada Ingots	MISS ROSALIND IDEN

dramatic critics, who have ever resented the innate spuriousness of this play about DAVID GARRICK. "Why," asked HENRY MORLEY, the first good critic who had to report the thing, "should English actors deal so lightly with the memory of their great chief, that, for the sake of so poor and false an effect as the placarding of Sothern as Garrick, they should falsify and confuse the memory of Garrick's life?" Mr. Sothern, we think, should have resisted the temptation to have his name brought into such apposition; for he is not a Garrick; he is a very long way indeed from being a Garrick, excellent as he is in his own way of art. . . . His serious passages, though

Breaking the News.

[“Hurry! Faster! Off the ships with the tanks! They have a rendezvous with hell a few miles down the road.”

Cairo “hot” Reporter.]

AND hell, of course, mustn’t be kept waiting. So my Uncle Gilbert, that ace reporter, found when he interviewed Mrs. Hagwith. He took a late bus to Much Solitude, thinking Wild Dash through Night to Rural Outpost. “Can we not make more speed, conductor?” he asked.

“The harsh necessity of lighting restrictions has increased transport difficulties a thousand-fold,” replied the latter. “While Joe, the driver, is making every effort, I very much doubt if we shall arrive before the earliest possible moment.”

“I trust that may not be too late,” riposted my uncle, straining his eyes into the obscurity.

A gaunt formidable woman answered his knock at what he decided, without seeing it, would be a creeper-clad haven, scrupulously clean.

“A fine time o’ night,” snapped Mrs. Hagwith. “Mrs. Gleave at the Post said look for you three hours back. Step inside. I’m rubbin’ a few things in to steep. Watch where you sit. I suppose it’s that allotment?”

“Well, as a matter of fact . . .”

“May as well know I’m not a woman to be put off. Everything fair and above-board, that’s me, and no hanky-panky. Six months and still nowt to draw. Before he went foreign, Tom says, ‘Mum, I’ve left you right: you’ll get money O.K., you will. I’ve signed a paper,’ he says. ‘Well,’ I says, ‘once in a while you’ve done me a bit of good,’ I says, ‘instead of being a thorn in my side and a worry.’”

“If you applied . . .” ventured my Uncle Gilbert, “though that isn’t really . . .”

“Applied!” Mrs. Hagwith laughed derisively. “Applied! If I ‘ad all the papers I’ve put pen to, I could fire my set-pot with ‘em. I’ve writ. I’ve trollopped backwards and forwards to this body and that, and do I get any forrader? Ask him!” Mrs. Hagwith scooped a ginger cat off the washing and pitched it into a cupboard.

“It was really something else,” said my uncle rather anxiously. “I have to tell you . . .”

“You’ll be them Food Facts, then, that comes an’ pries in your pantry. Let me tell you,” asserted Mrs. Hagwith, clapping soapy hands to her hips, “search this house from floor to ceiling you’ll not find one scrap o’ food

that isn’t honestly come by, and that’s more than most can say. Another thing, if it wasn’t *you* took my good iron railings, who did? You know, I’ll lay. Afore you start checkin’ on my points or seein’ if I’m immolated for dip-theria I’d ‘a thought,” said Mrs. Hagwith, “you’d ‘a made a effort to get me somethin’ instead.”

She slapped a shirt viciously into the water. “Me having to leave off a dozen times and chase children out o’ me sprouts, with me husband ‘ome for his supper any minute and,” she added vexedly, “folks comin’ three hours late to count every lump o’ sugar I ‘ave.”

“I assure you,” exclaimed my uncle, alarmed, “I have no intention of intruding on your domestic concerns.” He drew from his pocket a human document. “I merely wished to inform you that your son Thomas . . .”

“E’s all right?” Mrs. Hagwith swung up suddenly to fix a gimlet eye on him.

“So far as I know,” replied Uncle Gilbert hastily, “he’s perfectly safe and sound. It’s just . . .”

“Better be no hanky-panky,” cracked Mrs. Hagwith. “They ‘ave ‘is allotment, they’re not going to do owt to him, not if I know.”

“This letter,” faltered my uncle, “it’s to the effect that . . .”

“Don’t show me no more papers!” cried Mrs. Hagwith. “I’m done signin’ me name away.”

“. . . that your son, Thomas Hagwith, has been awarded the D.C.M. for

conspicuous gallantry in the great advance,” cried my uncle in one long breath. “My paper tenders its earnest congratulations on the award.”

“What’s that? Our Tom?”

“Private Thomas Hagwith, AB2468?”

“‘Im.”

“He’s won the D.C.M.”

“‘E ‘as, ‘as ‘e?’”

My Uncle Gilbert testifies that she was silent for a full half-minute.

“What shall I say?” ventured my uncle at last.

“Say?”

“In our paper?”

“You can say,” said Mrs. Hagwith, turning back to her bowl, “as it doesn’t matter about that allotment or them railings. Not now.”

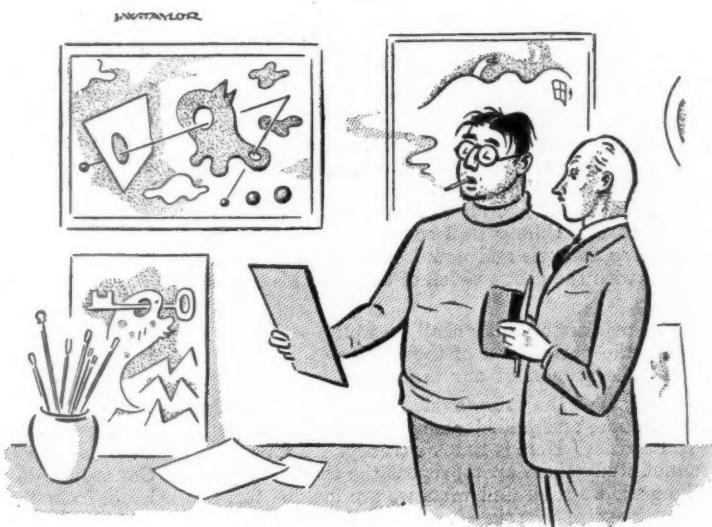
It was poor material for my uncle, but he improved on it wonderfully.

“Had Itensons,” ran the conclusion of his report, “I’d wish them all in the country’s service. I never expected less of Thomas,” added this indomitable little woman. “Tell the nation that nothing short of the greatest possible self-sacrifice allied to unrelenting prosecution of the war-effort will turn the scales of victory. Furthermore . . .”

But you know how it goes.

VENTRILLOQUIST

“At all events, what I said came straight from the horse’s mouth.”—*Local Paper*.



“At the moment I’m designing a form for the Ministry of Agriculture.”



"What's an easy type of Jerry plane to start on, Sergeant?"

Our Booking-Office (By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Roses in the Waste Land

STARTING in 1908 "with the study of Laforgue and the late Elizabethan dramas," on through the cactus waste of the 'twenties, through the sacred wood where "poetry is not a turning loose of the emotion but an escape from emotion," with a scrupulous Boston conscience and a burning artistic faith, Mr. T. S. ELIOT has travelled on. At the end of this thirsty trail come *Burnt Norton*, *East Coker*, *The Dry Salvages* and now last of all *Little Gidding* (FABER, 1/-) with the poet's vision of time and his hope for the future:

All manner of thing shall be well
By the purification of the motive
In the ground of our beseeching.

Time to-day is on the writer's side. It has been bewitched by J. W. Dunne, and jollied along with the *Conways* by Mr. J. B. Priestley. Here is ELIOT's theory. All four poems (you cannot study them apart) repeat the theme: we shall reach the goal, we shall find what we are looking for, but first we must realize that time is not only unimportant, but non-existent. "In my end is my beginning." "Right action is freedom from past and future also." "The moment of the rose and the moment of the yew-tree are of equal duration." The saint's privilege is "to apprehend the

point of intersection of the timeless with time." We can arrive only where we started from—our source in God. And the highest intellectual state is to realize our fusion with eternity and to live each moment, not as a dividing point, but as containing all history, past and future—"a condition of complete simplicity, costing not less than everything." It is not an easy idea and ELIOT has never been good at explaining things clearly. You regret this when reading his critical essays, but not in his poetry. He is an allusive poet and his virtue is to make you understand through the ear and the mind's eye. His language in these later poems is still symbolist—the symbolism, since *The Waste Land*, has become more and more ecclesiastic with doves and fire and roses, and in company with Aldous Huxley he now seems at home with fifteenth-century mystics. There are still the echoes, the literary allusions (some very unexpected ones), and it is for you to decide whether these really enrich the poetry or whether they are more like a nightmare parlour-game, with the other side making up all the rules. But in these last four poems ELIOT is at his very best in the descriptive passages (East Coker on a warm summer evening, the beacon of Dry Salvages off the howling Massachusetts coast, Little Gidding when "the brief sun flames the ice on ponds and ditches")—and in the lyrics. *Little Gidding* has two, "Ash on an old man's sleeve" and "The dove descending breaks the air," which have a pure singing tone as true as anything he has ever written.

P. M. F.

Harvest of Neutrality

It is dour enough to be a combatant, but a rather grimy neutrality, that risks offending the more magnanimous belligerent to placate the bullying one, is a soul-destroying attitude. The slow wilting of gallant spirits in such circumstances is the basic theme of Miss ALEXANDRA DICK's new novel, whose Polish heroine, escaped from Warsaw, arrives in Stockholm to look for work. Besides her humdrum Swedish relatives *Sabine* encounters a Polish airman—interned, and eating his heart out—and a generous Englishwoman running a frock shop for a clientèle whose partners are doing well out of the war. Through her first job, with a wealthy Jewish family, *Sabine* becomes attached to a Jewish child violinist; and when *Eva* the refugee is jettisoned by *Fru Isaksson* in a prudent move to Moscow, *Sabine* and *Eva* are wholeheartedly befriended by *Léonore* of the frock shop. With the subsequent departure of *Eva*, the interest of *How Can We Sing* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) perceptibly wanes. Whether it is her genius or her Jewish faith, or both, *Eva* stands for something that matters. The rest—for all their creator's clever marshalling of her opportunities—are froth on a particularly scummy stream of cosmopolitan "business as usual."

H. P. E.

Admiral Boscawen's Widow

In *Admiral's Wife*, which appeared two years ago, General OGLANDER told the story of Mrs. Edward Boscawen's life up to her forty-second year, when her husband died—the famous seaman of whom the elder Pitt said: "When I explain my projects to other admirals they always raise difficulties; Boscawen alone finds expedients." In *Admiral's Widow* (THE HOGARTH PRESS, 12/6), General OGLANDER deals with the forty-four years of her widowhood, from 1761 to 1805. Mrs. Boscawen was sufficiently interested in letters, or sufficiently bored by whist, which she called "that foe to human society," to co-operate with her friend, Mrs. Montagu, in founding the Blue-Stocking Assemblies, evening parties in which persons of wit and intellect mingled on theoretically equal terms with the more

thoughtful members of the aristocracy. Boswell was enraptured by Mrs. Boscawen. "Her manners," he wrote, "are the most agreeable and her conversation the best of any lady with whom I ever had the happiness to be acquainted." Boswell, however, was frequently enraptured by ladies, and in spite of this glowing tribute and of a comparison made by Hannah More between Mrs. Boscawen's letters and Madame de Sevigne's, her correspondence does not suggest that either in intelligence or in range of interest she was at all the equal of such contemporaries as Mrs. Thrale, Fanny Burney or the much undervalued Anna Seward. But she had character and a large heart, which brought her much happiness and proportionately great suffering. It took her a long time to rebuild her life after her husband's death, and no sooner had she reached some kind of contentment than her favourite son was drowned, after which she wrote of herself as a broken vessel that "will not ring, though it may still represent a cup or a basin and be of some little use."

In addition to her private sorrows she passed in the course of her long life through three periods in which England seemed on the brink of collapse. On the second of these occasions, round about 1779, when France and Spain came to the assistance of the American colonies, the English situation was in some respects worse than in 1940, for the country had not the same confidence in the justice of its cause. "Everyone," wrote Mrs. Boscawen, "must feel a weight of care for England, and the sad wickedness of Englishmen." The French were expected to land at any moment, and no one could talk of anything else. "I tremble like an aspen leaf when I think of invasions," Mrs. Boscawen cried, and the similar palpitations of Mrs. Thrale provoked Johnson to roar—"Shall I never hear a sentence again without the French in it? There is no invasion coming, and you know there is none." H. K.

Ignis Fatuus

A life of squalor relieved by a vision that transcends it is good enough reading if you can bring yourself to believe in the vision. But surely a dubious vision is worse than no vision at all? Bereft of it, one could at least give one's mind to the betterment of one's worldly condition; and the trouble with *Norma Ashe* (GOLLANCZ, 9/6) is that she lets herself get engulfed in the worst miseries of American urban life, while her "light"—a relic of her prosperous college days—flickers in and out like a will-o'-the-wisp. *Norma*, however, believes in it, for all its eccentricity. So from *Norma's* point of view, the point of view of the ruined landlady of a decayed boarding-house—and you gather Miss SUSAN GLASPELL shares it—the story is not the unredeemed tragedy it seems to the mere onlooker. *Norma* takes an honest part in a game she does not understand. Her husband, *Max Utterbach*, takes a dishonest one in a game he thinks he does—the effortless acquirement of money. He and their undesirable children, with *Norma's* lodgers and college companions, come and go realistically enough in the gloom they so effectively help to intensify.

H. P. E.

God Save the King

Little can JOHN BULL have imagined when he wrote a certain rather four-square keyboard tune that it would become his country's National Anthem, or that in politics it would be a Vicar of Bray. As Mr. PERCY SCHOLES relates in his interesting and entertaining booklet (O.U.P., 2/-), *God Save The King* was originally a Stuart anthem which turned Hanoverian overnight during "the 'forty-five," and remained so popular an expression of loyalty to that

House that it even accompanied GEORGE III into the sea while he was bathing, when its strains were discoursed by a band of fiddlers in a bathing-machine. Its various versions have been in turn patriotic, revolutionary, sentimental and bloodthirsty, and it has been often borrowed by other countries; but it remains, as originally, a prayer for The King in spite of its unnecessary and tart reminder to His Majesty that he is expected to "defend our laws," and the sinister underlying hint of what happened to the monarch who didn't. . . .

D. C. B.

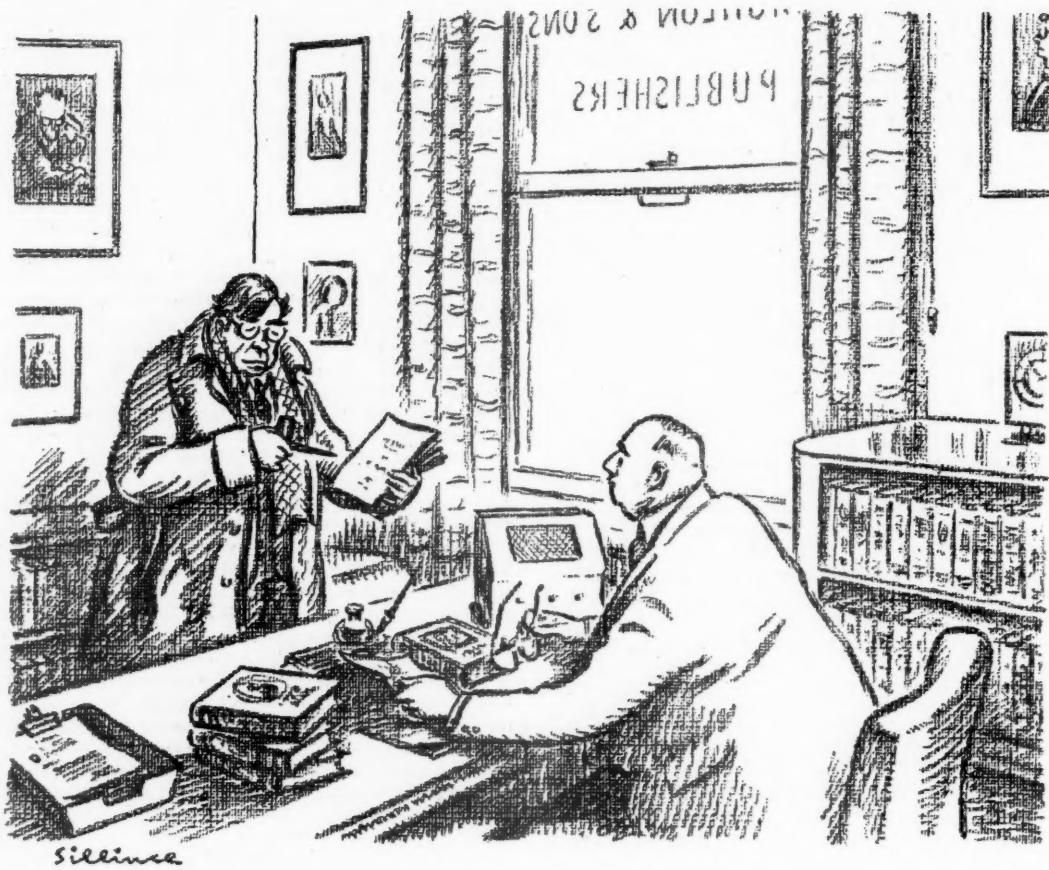
"Rufus"

Few careers, one would say, have been more fantastically varied than that of *Rufus Isaacs, First Marquess of Reading* (HUTCHINSON, 15/-), the first volume of whose Life by his son has just been published. As a boy young ISAACS was "the terror of his schoolmasters, the scandal of the neighbourhood, and the despair of his father." He had to be sent to sea in the hope that a life of adventure combined with discipline might meet the case, and as ship's boy (he stoutly refused to be apprenticed) he endured a voyage in the *Blair Athole* which, strangely enough, carried him to India among other places. He was not to see Calcutta again until he went there as Viceroy. And before that he was to be "hammered" on the Stock Exchange, and on the point of going out to Panama in the hope of retrieving his fortunes, had not his mother insisted on his reading for the Bar. The suggestion seemed fantastic, but in a few years he had begun his rapid rise. With all this, and the numerous important cases in which he figured, this first volume could hardly fail to be interesting. Yet somehow it is a little disappointing. Some fifty pages towards the end of the book are occupied with the Marconi affair and its reverberations, now perhaps better forgotten, and there are patches of dull reporting over such cases as Lever v. The Associated Newspapers and other actions. Probably the second volume will give Lord READING better opportunities.

L. W.



"Are we in the station yet?"



"I've got here something absolutely new—a book on the war up to the first week of January 1943."

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. I would be glad to know the correct mode of serving dinner in the kitchenette, as I understand that the family (the Shropshire Beetlewells) from fuel-saving motives intend utilizing this room when they return to town next month. What, for instance, is done with scullery-maid and cook while the meal is in progress? I may add that the kitchenette (8 ft. by 5) opens directly on to the fire-escape and that the footman who assists me in serving weighs some twenty-two stone and suffers from fallen arches. Also the scullery-maid is a case of split personality, we think. Sometimes she tells us she is married to a gentleman who has the largest stamp collection

in the world; at other times she gets depressed and says she is in limbo.

ARTHUR DINGFORK.

A. I should say floor space was your chief problem. If the diners tend to block the electric-cooker, rig up some kind of shelter where the cook can camp out comfortably on the fire-escape, with a brazier to keep the courses hot. Your stout footman I would suspend above the table on a hanging platform designed to be raised or lowered, like a clothes-rack with pulley, when he would assist in waiting from a horizontal posture. This should rest his arches. Sauces, to avoid continual passing and re-passing, could be served from a syringe of the

type used to spray disinfectant in a cinema, while soiled plates go directly into the washing-up bowl placed ready in the sink before which a screen is placed, the scullery-maid sitting beside the bowl upon a small stool. If she believes herself to be in limbo, she may just as well be in the sink as anywhere else; if she is temporarily the wife of the philatelist gentleman you mention, put it to her this way—that our foremost peeresses of the realm are cheerful priestesses of the spit and stew-pan these days.

* * * * *

Q. Can you tell me the name of an article I came across in the attic the other day made of two cylinders like

zinc wash-tubs inside each other with holes in the sides, a section of lead piping, a handle, five cog-wheels and a coil of tarred rope, covered over with very fine iron-wire gauze? It has a kind of spring inside and something that looks to me like a small stuffed perch. Do you know of any war-time use for it, and also for an old diving-belle we have had in the family since my grandfather's time?

BLACKPOOL RATEPAYER.

A. I should say that what you have in the attic is either a greenhouse boiler, a centrifugal soot-sifter, some half-completed device for registering earth tremors, or a rather novel dredge for shell-fish. Maybe the perch is not part of the original mechanism. It might, for instance, have been washed in during a high tide; but this, of course, is only conjecture. It may not be a perch at all; it may be a pilchard or a West Indian minnow which was put there to be out of the way while dusting. As to its war-time use, either the Ministry of Economic Warfare or your local salvage board might place it for you. I would have to see the elderly person referred to before suggesting the particular niche she could best fill.

* * * * *

Q. I have bought a push-bike and had lessons, but I never seem to be getting anywhere. What is wrong?

(Mrs.) CORA NOPPER.

A. Perhaps you do not make for anywhere in particular. Even in cycling one must have an object of some kind, you know, if one is not a trick cyclist. Try to invent little commissions for yourself. A friend of mine used to write a letter at Hanwell, address it to himself at Tooting, then pedal away, full steam ahead, to Tooting to get his letter. When he got it, he would write to himself at Penge, then pedal away to get that, and so on.

* * * * *

Q. I have been left by legacy a licensed house which I shall shortly reopen under new management and am uncertain what to call it as I do not consider such names as the Green Dragon, the Coach and Four, etc., to be at all suited to the age of mechanization in which we live. Can you make a suggestion?

D. T. PARLER-RUGG.

A. The Four Clippies, the Mug and Respirator, the Points and Tin-opener, are all distinctive and thoroughly topical. You do not mention size and locality, otherwise the Leaking Tank, the Queueurs' Arms or the Flat-footed Warden would be good for a house of entertainment on a somewhat grandiose

scale, whereas I could imagine a cosy little city dive with some such name as The Crater, or The Butter Ration.

* * * * *

Q. A friend of mine has a cow she calls Lucy which has been acting very strange since the blitzes when she started making a habit of having it in the lobby, as it was like one of the family, she stated. When put out to grass last spring, she (Lucy) began jumping—small articles at first, such as buttercups, then the pig-bucket, and now she thinks nothing of getting over the hedge, walking up to the front door, which is at the side in my friend's house, and licking the door-step, a wooden one. It has been that much licked that it is worn hollow in the middle, and Lucy has lately started jumping the next hedge and carrying on the same at the next door-step, which is the cause of my friend's trouble, as the lady from next door threatens to fetch a policeman, saying it turns her stomach to hear the licking. Would you say she had made up her mind to go right down the row licking door-steps (Lucy)? And, if so, what had better be done?

Mrs. MABEL BUSTARD.

A. There is always a danger in raising cows, etc., above their station. Having once been received on equal terms with the family, the animal naturally feels rebuffed now she is no longer invited indoors, and so affects a somewhat exaggerated lightheartedness to disguise her real feeling. The licking seems without motive, I must admit, but I should say it is undoubtedly her intention to hollow out steps systematically the entire length of the street, in which case, considering the difficulty of getting a determined cow to change her views, I feel that the only course open to your friend is to take Lucy permanently into the lobby. After all, what has been done once can be done again. If it was found that she tended to inconvenience ground-floor movements, it would always be possible to have a side door made at the front.

* * * * *

Q. Since being advised to share fire-sides as a fuel-saving measure, we in Balclava Avenue have tried hard to do our bit, but the trouble is that though sharers officially return home for food, it has become a rather delightful little custom to provide "snacks" round the fire, and I find it so difficult when my turn comes as, unlike others, I seem to have no relatives on farms or in provision-shops and do not know where to find those black markets one hears so much talk about. My usual group comprises six adults, all meat-eaters with the excep-

tion of an aged dissenting flautist, who tells me he was on a hay diet some years back.

HORATIA TIPPING (Miss).

A. I would be inclined to make the feeding competitive. A single jelly, for instance, can be made to last over several evenings if you let your guests eat it with a knitting-needle (this is great fun!), imposing on the one who finishes first some small penalty such as going round and doing the black-outs for the rest. Another most diverting method of spinning out a single slice of spam is to blindfold your guests, seat them in pairs, and present one of each pair with a saucer containing a very few morsels of the food. The object is to feed one's partner, but the food, naturally, is poked into all sorts of queer places (sometimes, with a little guidance from the onlooker, back into the cupboard, when it can be brought into circulation a second evening), but seldom in the mouth. Out of respect to your musical friend you could sometimes, for a change, give cups of grass soup followed by espago omelette, or a good knife-and-fork tea of boiled pondweed.

* * * * *

Q. The fellows in our hut are getting up an entertainment for the major's birthday and I am very worried as I have been cast for the part of a young Hawaiian woman who does what is known as a hula-hula dance, and I don't know what mother will think of it. She has never permitted my sister's wearing trousers so I feel certain she would be equally horrified to see me in a grass skirt, and I cannot conceal from her what is going on as we have always, as a family, been trained to tell mother everything. Also it is most difficult to get the movements of the hula-hula right. When I tried to practise a little behind the hut the other afternoon, our N.C.O. came along and put me on a charge; I cannot think why. What ought I to do?

Pte. STACEY TUTT.

A. Possibly your sister does not look attractive in trousers, whereas a grass-skirt may be the very thing for you. Then you must remember that the war makes curious demands on many of us. I know a sapper who was called upon to impersonate a nuthatch nesting for charity. Ask yourself too whether you have any right to torture Mrs. Tutt by picturing to her scenes of impropriety with which she is powerless to interfere. I cannot, I am afraid, enclose instructions of hula-hula movements, as the dance requires intuition rather than technical knowledge. Try to think of yourself as a hibiscus blossom.

First Lieutenant

THE Officer of the Day appears harassed. "The motor boat has broken down, Number One, and the Captain has got to see (D) at 10 o'clock."

One tells him to lower the whaler. The Canteen Manager is anxious. "Can I have some more hands to get the bacon below, sir, before it goes bad in the sun, sir, please, sir?"

"Tell the Chief Bosun's Mate to give you three hands from part of ship."

The Signalman is warm. "The Captain would like to see you about Clearing Lower Deck to talk to the ship's company."

On the way up to the Captain's cabin the Engineer Officer says "You can't possibly sling clean hammocks, we haven't enough water for washing them." The Coxswain says "When will you see requestmen?" The Gunner's Mate says "Who shall I put in place of Simpson as Communication Number of 'X' gun?" The doctor says "When can I have these ratings for inoculation?" The Sub says "When can I have payment?" The Yeoman says "There is an exercise for officers at 1030. From the Captain, will you arrange who is to be there?" The Leading Cook says "There is an oil leak in the galley and I have had to shut down. Can you make dinner half an hour late, please, sir?"

One replies "Yes, we have; in ten

minutes' time; Lewis; never; stand easy; everyone available; yes, tell the Chief Bosun's Mate."

The Captain has a liver. "Why has the motor-boat broken down? Why has the water to my cabin been turned off? Why is the bacon still on the upper deck? Why didn't you remind me about clearing lower deck? What requestmen have you seen this morning? Who have you detailed for the officers' exercise?"

One says "I have put Lewis to replace Simpson, sir, as Communication Number of 'X' gun."

"Well done, Number One! Now Lewis is a good hand. Always thought so. Comes from the same town as I do, you know."

One does. "Does he really, sir? Where is that?"

"Bridgefallow in Sussex. But I see you are busy, Number One. Come and talk to me about those other things when you have a moment to spare."

The Gunner is in waiting outside the door. "The Chief Bosun's mate has pinched two of my torpedomen to strike down bacon." The Supply Petty Officer wants to know if he may throw a tin of peas over the side as they are blown and what officers should he get to condemn them. The Navigator complains that someone has left a knife on top of the compass. The Tombola Committee wants per-

mission to play this evening. The Shipwright does not know which hatch is leaking and could he be shown, please? "Can we play football against X this afternoon?" from the Sports officer.

The Officer of the Day says the flotilla Gunnery Officer is waiting in the wardroom. A boat with the Captain of Y—— is coming alongside. The Canteen Committee would like an emergency meeting. The painter thinks the colour is too dark but is not quite sure. The Correspondence Officer says the report on the weight of potatoes we can carry has to go in this morning. A messenger from the ship alongside wants to know when one can go over and see his First Lieutenant.

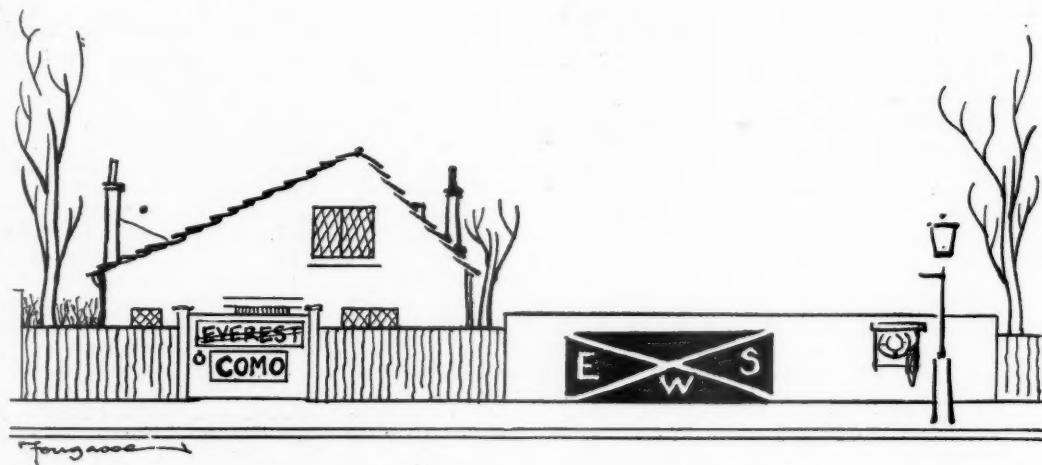
The Coxswain reports "Requestmen ready to see you, sir."

• •

Familiars

SIT with me, Anger, be my guide,
A second-pilot at my side;
Help me my straight true course to
steer
Through the dark labyrinth of fear.

But, Pity, be not absent when
My bombs go down; be with me then
That I may not insensate be
Nor outcast from humanity.

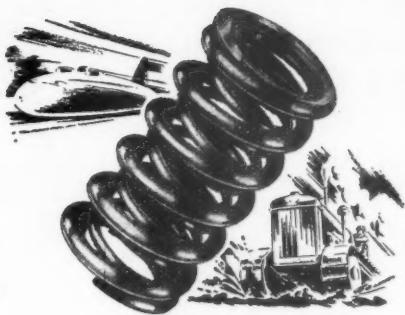


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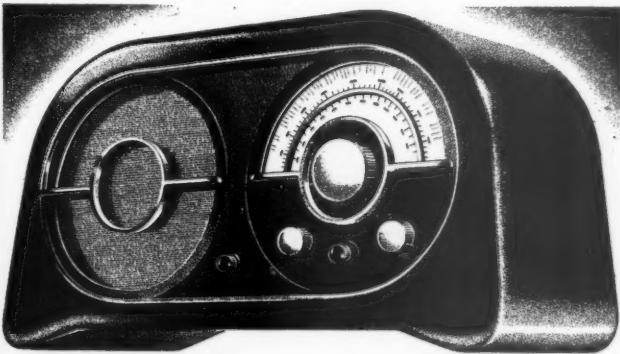
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Many people will recognise this headline as Royal Air Force slang meaning "unfortunately you may find it very difficult to obtain them"—or words to that effect.

The point is, of course, that Morlands Glastonburys are sheepskin lined slippers and boots, and they are scarce in the shops because sheepskins must be used to give our Airmen the protection against cold they need at high altitudes.

There will be a few Glastonburys available from time to time and these are being distributed fairly, but you may have to wait some time for a pair.

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on stem.

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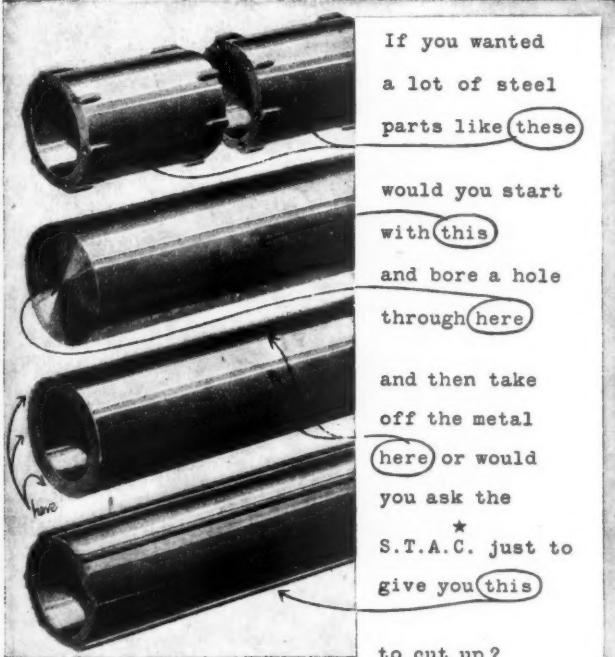
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